Buddhism and Nature

The Lecture
delivered on the Occasion of the EXPO 1990

An Enlarged Version with Notes

Lambert Schmithausen

Studia Philologica Buddhica
Occasional Paper Series
VII

Tokyo · The International Institute for Buddhist Studies · 1991

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Published by the International Institute for Buddhist Studies:
5-3-23 Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105, Japan

First published 1991
Printed in Japan by Bethel-Photo Printing Company, Tokyo

ISBN 4-906267-23-8

Correspondence regarding all editorial matters should be sent to the Director of the International Institute for Buddhist Studies in Tokyo.

Foreword

The present paper is, minor changes apart, identical with the one I read at the International Symposium on the occasion of Expo '90 on "Buddhism and Nature", Sept. 26, 1990. But I have now added notes containing documentation and references as well as some minor supplements. Besides, discussion of a few more complex issues has been appended as *Additions*, chs. I-III of which are a revised version of parts of a paper presented at the conference "Buddhism into the year 2000" in Bangkok, Feb. 1990, and, in a modified form, at the International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo, on Oct. 4, 1990.

Documentation and references supplied in the notes are not intended to be complete.

I take the opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Tsugunari Kubo and Dr. Akira Yuyama for kindly having invited me to the symposium, to my dear colleague Noritoshi Aramaki for having taken the trouble to translate my symposium paper into Japanese, to my friend and colleague S.A. Srinivasan for having patiently checked my English and for several important suggestions, and to B. Quessel for constant help in preparing the final print-out. For reference and/or access to pertinent literature I have to thank, among others, Dr. Chr. Cüppers, Dr. F. Erb, Prof. Dr. Sh. Katsura, A. Ratia, Dr. P. Schmidt-Leukel, P. Steinacher, Prof. Dr. A. Wezler and, once more, Dr. A. Yuyama.

Buddhism and Nature

I. Programmatic and Theoretical Considerations

1.1 In using the word " n a t u r e ",[1] I have a special meaning in mind: the one the word has when we speak, in these days, of destruction, or exploitation, or subjugation of nature. More precisely, I focus on two aspects:

a) One is nature in the sense of e c o - s y s t e m s including characteristic sets of s p e c i e s of plants and animals; especially eco-systems essentially untampered with by human activities, i.e. w i l d nature. In a sense, however, such eco-systems where man's activity is careful and in harmony with nature, and which are hence close to nature, may also be called "nature".

b) The other aspect is nature in the sense of natural entities. In this case, we are mainly concerned with i n d i v i d u a l animals and plants as living or even sentient beings. From this point of view, there is little reason to distinguish between wild and domesticated ones. In clinging to life and recoiling from pain, both are alike.

1.2 The distinction of these two aspects of nature is important because we are today confronted with two different sets of transgression:

a) One is the destruction and debasement or pollution of specific e c o - s y s t e m s [2] as well as of the global eco-system as a whole.

b) The other is the destruction or injuring of i n d i v i d u a l s . Strictly speaking, this comprises all hunting, fishing, butchering, felling trees or cutting plants. But what is especially problematic are such forms of these activities as are needless or employ cruel methods; and, what is perhaps worse, cruel forms of mass rearing of animals, animal tests, etc.

1.3 In many cases, to be sure, these two aspects are interdependent. Excessive hunting of individuals of a certain species may lead to the extinction of the species itself, as, e.g., in the case of whales, and hence have negative ecological effects. Or the destruction of an eco-system like the tropical rain forests involves not only the extirpation of probably 20-50 millions of species[3] but also the injuring or killing of countless individual animals and plants. But there are also cases where what is detrimental or beneficial to nature as an eco-system on the one side and to individual natural beings on the other do not coincide. E.g., swatting a mosquito or moderate fishing or hunting by traditional methods is fatal to the victim but does not affect the eco-system. Sometimes, conservation or restoration of eco-systems may even require the killing of intrusive animals (like the rabbit, or foxes and stray cats, in Australia) or the removal of unsuited plants (as in our artificial monoculture forests).

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[1] Cp also § 62.1.

[2] Including a specific set of species of a n i m a l s and plants.

[3] Josef H. Reichholf, Der unersetzbare Dschungel (München 1990), 20f.

2 As a scholar I am expected to deal with my subject-matter in an objective way. If this were to mean: without emotional concern, and without a personal standpoint, I have to admit failure in advance. I am indeed depressed and sometimes even enraged at the atrocities perpetrated by man against nature and at the tremendous loss of natural beauty and diversity. And I do not hesitate to admit that in giving this lecture my aim is to contribute, albeit in a very modest way, to a change of attitude and behaviour towards nature.

3.1 But I presume you expect me to make this contribution as a scholar, more precisely as a Buddhologist, as a historian of Buddhist ideas, i.e. with reference to the Buddhist tradition. Of course I am ready to do this, too. Accordingly, what I intend to do in this lecture is to describe and analyze, as objectively as possible, the attitude of the Buddhist tradition towards nature, but also to relate this attitude to our present problems, especially those of environmental destruction and pollution.

3.2 Needless to say, I have to make a choice. Since my main field of study is Indian Buddhism, I restrict my references to Far Eastern Buddhism largely to one particularly interesting and paradigmatic complex of ideas, leaving, however, more adequate and fuller treatment to my more competent colleagues. Besides, since the change of attitude towards nature required today must be one of the majority of people, not merely one of a small élite, I do not focus, primarily, on sublime but abstract or difficult ideas,[4] but rather on evaluations, attitudes and modes of behaviour more or less intelligible to and practicable by everybody.

4 But before starting let me address a few theoretical problems involved in the matter.[5]

4.1 If the main motive for this lecture is the contemporary problem of environmental destruction and pollution, how can we expect help from an old tradition for which that problem did not yet exist and by which it was therefore not expressly addressed.[6] But this is not entirely true; for man-made environmental destruction and

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[4] I have to admit that another reason is lack of clarity on my part. E.g., one of the shortcomings my essay will be blamed for is the fact that apart from a marginal reference (§ 14.3) it does not deal with the implications of Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) for the behaviour towards and evaluation of nature (cp., e.g., Bloom 1972, 126ff; Tauscher 1989, 188-190; Stephen Batchelor in: Dharma Gaia, 180). Though I was bold enough to make a few suggestions in my earlier paper (Schmithausen 1985, 103f), I have, in the meantime, lost confidence in my understanding of this idea and its implications for the question of nature, even as regards the Indian context, let alone the Far East, and limitations of time have so far prevented me from a more careful study of this point — as well as, alas, of many others.

[5] For these and the following considerations, cp. also J. B. Callicott and R. T. Ames in: Callicott/Ames 1989, 279ff.

[6] Cp., e.g., Palihawadana 1979, 31f.

extinction of species is by no means confined to the present. It has occurred, albeit on a much smaller scale, already in the past: e.g., in China[7] or in the Mediterranean world, large-scale deforestation took place already more than 2000 years ago. And it is possible that already at the end of the glacial period man contributed decisively to the extinction of big mammals like the mammoth.[8] On the other hand, the North American woodland Indians seem to have lived very prudently in their environment.[9] Hence, the question what old religious traditions may contribute to what we now reflectively call "environmental[10] ethics" is not illegitimate, still less so when the tradition considered is still alive and a major force in a country like Japan.

4.2 a) There is, however, a discussion, that started in the early seventies, as to whether thought and religious belief do indeed condition the way people behave towards nature, or whether they are, on the contrary, rather ineffective in this context.[11] Actually, although Eastern beliefs are said to stress harmony of man with nature in contrast to the Western concept of dominance and exploitation, it is a fact that environmental damage is now hardly less serious in the East than in the West.

b) Yet, it appears that no simple answer is available. It is obvious that the modern problems of environmental destruction in Oriental countries are to a large extent due to the influence of Western civilization and its attitudes and values.

c) Still, the question remains why the *negative* aspects and effects of this influence, especially in the context of environmental destruction, have, at least until recently, met with comparatively *little resistance* in almost all Oriental countries. One reason is surely the military and economic success of Western civilization, as also the allurement of its material standard of living and consumer goods — aspects which appeal to deep-rooted human instincts like search for material safety and greed for wealth and comfort: instincts which have always tended to overcome religious inhibitions. At the same time, Eastern traditions are by no means homogeneous, and not all of them are in favour of harmony with nature. In Ancient

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[7] Rötz 1984, 80-83.

[8] Marvin Harris, Cannibals and Kings, New York (Vintage books) 1978, 29ff. This view is, however, not unanimously accepted: cp., e.g., Werner Müller, Geliebte Erde, Bonn [3]1979, 43ff.

[9] Peter Farb, Die Indianer, München 1988, 259.

[10] When using the term "environment", I do not intend the connotation of anthropocentrism it presupposes, contrasting man to *his* surroundings as it does. As for "anthropocentrism", I use it in the sense that the guideline for man's behaviour, or of ethical theory, is only or primarily *man's interests*. I do not challenge what one may call "transcendental" anthropocentricity, viz. that as far as he has any option it is always *man* himself who chooses the guideline of his behaviour, and that it is always, ultimately, by means of his own sensory and cognitive apparatus that he collects and interprets the data underlying his choice.

[11] Cp. also M. Klöcker and U. Tworuschka in: Klöcker/Tworuschka 1986, 176 (referring to Y. F. Tuan for China, and H. Cancik for the Roman Empire).

China, e.g., the influential Confucian master Hsün-tzu expressly advocated subjugation of nature by man.[12] Thus, the Chinese tradition comprised several currents, of which nature-affirming Taoism was only one, and hardly the most influential at that.[13]

5.1 Hence, it may be asked whether the attitude of the B u d d h i s t tradition towards nature, too, is perhaps ambiguous, comprising heterogeneous strands,[14] among which some may favour protection of nature whereas others may have some bearing on the conspicuous lack of resistance to the impact of Western civilization.

5.2 As I am going to show, this is indeed the case. Yet I want to stress that in pointing out problematic aspects also, my purpose is not criticism for its own sake. I rather think that if one wants to appeal to, or mobilize, Buddhist tradition in support of the protection of nature, one must be fully aware of the problems involved in the matter, if one wishes to find viable solutions.

II. The Buddhist Attitude towards Nature

6 In discussing the Buddhist attitude towards nature, we may distinguish two aspects: Practical behaviour towards nature on the one hand, and evaluation of nature on the other.

II.A. Practical Behaviour

7 As for p r a c t i c a l b e h a v i o u r , it may be viewed as being, to a large extent, determined by a tension between, on the one hand, t o l e r a t i n g or even favouring the u t i l i z a t i o n of nature, and, on the other, i n h i b i t - i n g it in order to prevent (or simply preventing *de facto*) e x c e s s i v e utilization, i.e., exploitation; and the crucial inhibiting factor was, in Ancient India, the fact that utilization often involves injuring or even killing living beings, more precisely: i n d i v i d u a l living beings.[15]

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[12] Rötz 1984, 309 and 312ff. Cp. also ibid., index s.v. Naturbeherrschung.

[13] Cp. Callicott/Ames 1989, 283f (referring to Yi-fu Tuan). — In India, too, the situation is complex. Kings were, of course, very much hunters and colonizers. Local Hindu kings in 18th century Andhra are described in the chronicles to have constantly destroyed forests in order to build temples. (Oral communication by S. A. Srinivasan from a Telugu Vaṃśāvalī, problably from the beginning of the 17th century).

[14] Cp. also P.deSilva 1979, 83f.

[15] In other words: In terms of "human ecology", there is, on the one hand, the necessity, for man, to live on nature (i.e., on animals, plants and the elements), and, on the other, the fact that exploitation destroys precisely this basis of man's life. Many so-called primitive cultures seem to be, consciously or not, familiar with the latter fact, but it appears that psychologically inhibition against

8.1 In the so-called "ascetic"[16] religions of Ancient India (Jainism and Buddhism), killing or injuring living beings is regarded as both unwholesome and fundamentally immoral; for, on the one hand, killing or injuring them is bad karma entailing evil consequences for the perpetrator after his death, and on the other all living, sentient beings are afraid of death and recoil from pain just like oneself.[17]

8.2 But in Ancient India not only men and animals but also plants and seeds, and even water and earth, were felt to be living and sentient.[18] Under these circumstances, only ascetics or religious mendicants may be able to avoid killing and injuring, e.g. by living on a l m s . But lay people have no such possibility. Even if they can avoid killing animals, most of them can hardly, in a primarily agricultural society, avoid felling trees and harvesting or preparing (and this means killing or injuring) vegetables, grains and fruits, and digging the earth, or ordering others to do so.

9 This unfavourable situation has, however, been relieved in Buddhism by n a r r o w i n g d o w n the range of living, sentient beings killing or injuring which is bad karma. There is n o fundamental change in the case of a n i m a l s . Killing them intentionally is bad karma also in Buddhism, in Early Buddhism[19] as well as in Mahāyāna[20].[21] But in the case of p l a n t s (and still more so of earth

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exploitation is primarily determined by the idea that nature is to a large extent animate or inhabited by spirits, and by a marked awe of killing life (especially larger animals and trees), which is difficult to dissociate from fear of revenge of the victim (cp., for early India, § 42 + fn. 211) or of spirits provoked by transgression (cp. § 11.1).

[16] I.e. śramaṇic, asceticism being taken to imply renunciation, i.e., abstention from mundane pleasures, family life, etc., but not necessarily severe austerities.

[17] E.g., Āyār I.2.3.4 (p. 8,23-25) and I.3.3.1 (p. 15,18ff); Dasav 6.11; TattvBh VII.5; Sn 368ab; 705; Ud V.1 = Uv V.18; SN V 353f; VisM IX.10; $MPPU_L$ II, 793; Y 198,1-3; BCA VIII.90.

[18] Schmidt 1968, 644-648; *Plants* §§ 2.1 and 2.2.

[19] E.g., MN I 285f; 313; 489; AN III 204f; 212f; V 264-266 (*pāṇātipāta* as the first of ten bad actions leading to evil rebirth; *pāṇa* includes, of course, animals: cp., e.g., DN-a 69,25; see also § 39.3 (+ fn. 182) and § 42).

[20] See fn. 243.

[21] Accordingly, butchering, hunting and also fishing (let alone hunting and fishing for mere fun: cp. AKBh 240,20 (read *krīḍārthaṃ*)) are considered immoral activities and, on the whole though not always, avoided by Buddhists, and professional butchering, etc., is viewed with disdain (cp., e.g., for Sri Lanka, Maithri Murthi 1986, 28ff and 48 (but also 21 and 25, and Gombrich 1971, 261); Burma: Spiro 1982, 45; Tibet: L.A. Waddell, The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism, repr. 1971, 567f; cp. also Y 20,15ff). Cp. also official prohibitions or restrictions of hunting, fishing and other killing of animals

and especially water)[22], Buddhism has weakened inhibition considerably.

10.1 As far as I can see, there is, in Buddhist texts, hardly any passage expressly and u n a m b i g u o u s l y declaring injuring or killing plants or digging the earth to be bad karma;[23] and there is, in contrast to the Jaina sources,[24] no e x p l i c i t statement declaring plants or even earth and water to be living, sentient beings. Yet, this does not necessarily mean that in Buddhism plants were from the outset regarded as i n sentient, as they are in fact viewed in later Buddhist tradition.[25] For, an explicit canonical statement d e n y i n g them the status of sentient beings does not seem to exist either.[26] Moreover, at least m o n k s and n u n s are expressly prohibited from injuring plants and seeds.[27]

10.2 What is more, there are some old canonical verses[28] which in declaring spiritual attitudes like benevolence as well as actual abstention from killing or injuring animate beings to be the right attitude or behaviour for monks as well as lay persons, speak of mobile a n d s t a t i o n a r y a n i m a t e b e i n g s . These stationary living beings are doubtless, at any rate primarily, the p l a n t s .[29]

10.3 In my opinion, plants were, in Earliest Buddhism, a kind of b o r d e r - l i n e c a s e .[30] In the context of describing ideal behaviour or of cultivating the spiritual attitude of non-aggressiveness and benevolence, there was no reason to

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in Buddhist states, from Aśoka onward (cp., e.g., EncBuddh 291; Maithri Murthi 1986, 19ff; Atisha 1991, 9).

[22] See *Plants* ch. III.C.

[23] An exception is found in a modern school textbook from Bhutan describing n e e d l e s s injuring of a tree as 'sinful': Aris 1990, 99. — Sn 394 and a few other canonical passages (like SN IV 350f: see *Plants* § 20.2) recommending or mentioning abstention from injuring also the stationary (animate) beings (i.e., probably, plants) as right behaviour for lay people do not explicitly state that transgression would be bad karma (cp. *Plants* § 26.3). — For later sources expressly declaring injuring plants n o t to be bad karma see § 57 (+ fn. 284) and *Plants* § 26.2.

[24] E.g., Āyār I.1.5.4-7 (p. 4,26ff); Dasav 4.1 (p. 6,3ff).

[25] See *Plants* §§ 30ff.

[26] Cp. *Plants* §§ 3.2; 22.2.2; 29.1.1-29.2.

[27] DN I 64, etc.; Pāc. 11 (Vin IV 34). See *Plants* §§ 4.1ff.

[28] E.g., Sn 146; 394; 704. See *Plants* § 20.2ff.

[29] See *Plants* §§ 20.4.2ff.

[30] See *Plants* § 24.1.

exclude even a border-line case.[31] Monks and nuns were, on the whole, even in a position to act accordingly.[32] But from the Jaina point of view even the Buddhist monks and nuns, who were permitted to accept food expressly prepared for them, could be charged with indirect responsibility for killing since the preparation mostly involved harvesting or at least cutting to pieces, pounding or cooking, etc., i.e. killing, of fresh plants.[33] And for most lay followers, especially peasants, complete abstention from destroying and injuring plants was simply impossible. Hence, in order to keep both monks and lay followers free from what was deemed unnecessary inconvenience and qualms, the sentience of plants was, by and large, ignored in this connection.

10.4 A similar position is still met with in Sri Lanka[34] and Burma[35] on a popular level; but on the doctrinal level the view that plants are living, sentient beings was expressly rejected, at least in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, as also by some Far Eastern schools[36] and Masters.[37]

11 Yet, inhibitions with regard to injuring plants were not abolished completely.[38]

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[31] See *Plants* § 24.2.1.

[32] Cp. *Plants* § 24.3.

[33] Cp. *Plants* § 25.1.

[34] Maithri Murthi 1986, 62.

[35] Oral communication from a Burmese Buddhist (I apologize for not having noted down his name) in a discussion after a public lecture on the subject delivered at the A.N.U, Canberra, in October 1989.

[36] E.g., the Fa-hsiang (Hossō) school.

[37] See fn. 131.

[38] In addition to the aspects mentioned in §§ 11.1 and 11.2, one could add the idea that trees deserve gratitude for the service they render people, esp. offering shade and fruits, and should not be injured or felled by a person who has benefited by them (e.g. Jā IV 352; Petavatthu II.9.3 and 5; AN III 369; cp. Kabilsingh 1987, 10; 1990, 303). This idea need not imply that the tree is actually regarded as a sentient being, but at least it is treated as if it were one, i.e. like a friend or partner (cp. also *Plants* § 26.2). Of course, protecting a useful tree from injury is, at least *de facto*, also in the interest of its long-term utilization. — Cp., in this connection, also the special status of the Bo tree (*Ficus religiosa*) (cp., e.g., L.deSilva 1987, 19; Shiva Shanker Tripathi, Buddhism and the Ecological Crisis, in: Dwivedi 1989, 197ff). At T vol 24, 830a21ff, the Bo tree is not only one of five kinds of trees (including *caitya* trees) which should not normally be felled, but is the only one which should not be felled in any case, not even for repairing a collapsed pagoda or monastery.

11.1 Firstly, Buddhism has accepted the popular belief that plants, especially big trees, are inhabited by d i v i n i t i e s or s p i r i t s protecting them.[39] Usually[40] these divinities are regarded as independent beings that can move to another tree and are in fact asked to do so when the tree in which they are residing is required.[41] Hence, the inhibition is not very strong,[42] though one text says that the divinity may protest successfully.[43]

11.2 Secondly, in a few sources the prohibition, for monks, to destroy plants is justified by the fact that plants are the abode of a n i m a l s .[44]

12 But such ecological considerations appear to be rather exceptional. The emphasis in the practical concern of traditional Buddhists with nature is on i n d i v i d u a l creatures,[45] particularly animals, and on d i r e c t injury or rather killing.[46] This is at least one of the reasons why in (at least most) contemporary Buddhist societies there is little if any inhibition in using pesticides in agriculture.[47]

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[39] See § 64.1; *Plants* §§ 5.3 and 39.1.2. Cp. also L.deSilva 1987, 19. — Water deity: e.g. T vol. 23, 604c6; tree and water deities: J. L. Panglung, Die Erzählstoffe des Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya analysiert auf Grund der tibetischen Übersetzung, Tokyo 1981, 18. — It is well known that Tibetan Buddhism has integrated all kinds of natural spirits protecting lakes, springs, mountains or the soil against human exploitation; cp. also Atisha 1991, 14 (left col.).

[40] For a kind of intermediate conception in the Bhaddasālajātaka (Jā IV 144ff, esp. 153ff) see *Plants* § 5.4 (end).

[41] T vol. 23, 776a13ff; vol. 24, 576c23ff. — Acc. to Sp 760, a tree may become vacant because the deity owning it dies (*yassa devaputtassa pariggaho ahosi, so cuto*). Cp. T vol. 24, 823b19f.

[42] Still less so when it is said that it is the "ethical norm for trees(!!)" (*rukkha-dhamma*) that the tree deity does not become displeased or angry (let alone take revenge) when its tree is felled or deprived of roots, bark, leaves, flowers or fruits (AN III 370; Sp 759), and that a deity that has not kept to this *dhamma* is not admitted to the half-monthly meeting of deities in the Himalayas (Sp 759f). Cp. also *Plants* § 26.2.

[43] T vol. 23, 776a20f; vol. 24, 576c28f.

[44] T vol. 23, 75a23ff; 776b18ff. Cp. also § 39.4 and *Plants* § 5.2.

[45] Cp. Schmithausen 1985, 112; Tauscher 1989, 188. See also *Add.* ch. I.B.

[46] See §§ 37.1ff.

[47] E.g. in Thailand where the precept not to kill animals is anyway not taken very seriously by peasants in the case of smaller animals (Terwiel 1972, 340), but also in Sri Lanka where it is, on the whole, observed more strictly (Maithri Murthi 1986, 42ff). On the other hand, Spiro (^{2}1982, 45)

13 Another problem is that in Buddhist countries the slaughtering of animals is often merely left to other people more or less outside Buddhist society (e.g., in Sri Lanka, to Moslems).[48] Or direct, bloody killing is avoided in favour of some i n d i r e c t way of putting the animal to death, as when fishes are not chopped to death but let to die out of water.[49] Such methods often inflict more pain upon the victim than direct killing would do. But such procedures are clearly not in harmony with the true spirit of Buddhist ethics which also enjoins c o m p a s s i o n and s y m p a t h y with all living beings.[50]

14.1 On the other hand, for peasants it is indeed most difficult to keep the precept not to kill, even if it is restricted to animals.[51] Still worse is the situation if people have to subsist to a large extent on fishing, as in Japan. For such people even the mitigated demands of Buddhist lay ethics did not or at least did not sufficiently remove the tension between what was necessary for survival and what was regarded as morally unobjectionable, i.e. between utilization and inhibition.

14.2 In Theravāda Buddhism, the usual way to overcome this difficulty appears to have been balancing or postponing bad karma by means of "making merit",[52] e.g.

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observes that in Burma the government had difficulties to persuade people to use DDT.

[48] Gombrich 1971, 261; Maithri Murthi 1986, 53; 56; Burma: Spiro ²1982, 45; Thailand: Terwiel 1972, 340f; Sherpas: Alsdorf 1961, 561. — However, at least in some Buddhist societies even r a i s i n g cattle for slaughtering appears to have been rare (Spiro ²1982, 45; Maithri Murthi 1986, 53; 59f) or at least to have been done with a bad conscience (Gombrich 1971, 261).

[49] Terwiel 1972, 340. Cp. also Spiro ²1982, 45 (Burma).

[50] Cp., e.g., DN I 4 (*dayāpanno sabbapāṇabhūtahitānukampī*: monk); MN I 287 (id.: householder); Sn 145c-147d; L.deSilva 1987, 17.

[51] Gombrich 1971, 245; cp. also Maithri Murthi 1986, 48.

[52] I.e. good karma which is so strong that its maturation compensates for or postpones the maturation of the bad karma (cp. Th 872). Cp. also Spiro ²1982, 119f; cp. also 157f (interpretation of apotropaic rites in terms of counterbalancing bad karma); Gombrich 1971, 215f (mentioning a case in which the effect of bad karma is postponed by means of merit until the attainment of arhatship which in its turn prevents its retribution (thus rendering it *ahosi-kamma*)). The idea, however, that bad karma can directly be a n n u l l e d by merit is reported by Gombrich (1971, 216f) as a popular variant running clean counter to canonical doctrine. — SN IV 322 propounds that karma may be cancelled by means of unlimited benevolence (*mettā*), etc. (cp. F. Enomoto, On the Annihilation of *karman* in Early Buddhism, in: Transactions of the International Conference of Orientalists in Japan, 34/1989, 46); but in other passages (Enomoto, op. cit., 47ff) this seems to be interpreted not as cancellation proper of the karma but as anticipation, in this life, of its retribution. Cp. also Vetter 1989, 90f. However, Buddhaghosa (VisM XIX.16) expressly distinguishes karma that only obstructs (*upapīḷaka*) other karma, i.e. weakens or modifies its retribution, from karma that d e s t r o y s (*upaghātaka*)

by donations to the Order. But for poor people this may not have been possible on a sufficiently large scale. Hence the problematic attempts to avoid bad karma by leaving the killing to somebody else or by resorting to sometimes cruel indirect methods considered less immeritorious for the perpetrator.

14.3 In Mahāyāna Buddhism, life is made easier by a whole set of practices to get rid of bad karma. One of them is cultivating the insight, or even the mere belief, that everything, hence also the evil act or the distinction between good and evil, is ultimately void.[53] Others are worshipping or merely evoking a Buddha or celestial Bodhisattva or his name,[54] and muttering Dhāraṇīs[55] or performing ceremonies of pacification or atonement.[56]

14.4 To be sure, such practices save, e.g., professional fishermen from the almost hopeless situation of being doomed to accumulate a gigantic amount of bad karma; but the problem is that at the same time they render killing too easy; for they reduce inhibitions to the extent of rendering the precept not to kill animals practically ineffectual.

14.5 Some years ago, I could myself watch, on television, how Japanese fishermen butchered a large number of dolphins and afterwards performed an atonement ceremony.[57] I am afraid that from this mere reminiscence of an inhibition it is not too far a step to the indiscriminate, cruel and ecologically disastrous high sea drift-net fishing which has fortunately now been abandoned by Japan in the Southern Pacific but unfortunately not yet in the Northern.[58]

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other karma and wards off retribution.

[53] Śikṣ 171,13ff. For an (in my opinion) more authentic application of the idea of the emptiness of both breaking the precepts (esp. the precept not to kill) and keeping them see MPPU 163b10ff and 164a20ff = $MPPU_L$ II 860(ff) and 864.

[54] Śikṣ 173,13ff.

[55] Śikṣ 172,13ff.

[56] For an example see § 14.5.

[57] Another case interesting in this connection (though perhaps rather to be associated with the indigenous, non-Buddhist tradition) is the report, in Time, Oct 16, 1989, on an old Japanese ivory carver, who, after discovering a bullet in a section of ivory and thereby understanding that most ivory stems from elephants killed by poachers, has placed the ivory section with the bullet on the family altar and sprinkles some water on it every day in order to pacify the spirits of the elephants slain.

[58] Greenpeace Magazin 3/1990, 6. Cp. also my letter of protest to the Minister of Fishery published by Prof. Kajiyama in his article "Buddha no oshie to wa nani ka: kompon bukkyō e no maneki" in: Book Guide, Bukkyō nyūmon, Bukkyō vol. 3, June 1990, 23.

15 Under these circumstances, i.e., in view of the fact that balance has been lost by a preponderance of the exploitation side, what is required today is rather to r e - e s t a b l i s h i n h i b i t i o n s . For this purpose, a new awareness of the old Buddhist teaching that animals, as sentient beings, should not be killed or injured, would certainly be helpful, though perhaps emphasis should nowadays be laid not so much on killing as such but rather on n e e d l e s s and c r u e l killing, and on destruction of e c o - s y s t e m s . And we should also be aware of the fact that not only the fisherman, butcher, peasant or industrialist but also and perhaps primarily the c o n s u m e r is responsible for what actually happens.[59]

16 In this connection, another central element of the Buddhist spiritual tradition must be mentioned, namely the central role that is attributed to egoism and g r e e d as one of the main causes of misery and harm. There is no doubt that our environmental disaster is to a considerable extent due to the insatiable greed of businessmen and industrialists as well as consumers,[60] i.e., more or less, all of us. Buddhism on the whole (at least as far as lay people are concerned)[61] does not, as a matter of principle, mind wealth and prosperity,[62] but they are not the ideals of Buddhism either,[63] and both the acquisition and the use of wealth have to be in full accord with the ethical norms,[64] among which not to kill or injure living beings, and — so one may add — not to destroy their habitat, is the first.

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[59] See § 38.

[60] Cromwell Crawford (in: Radical Conservatism, 166) and Glenn D. Paige (ib., 145) aptly add, to the greed of egoistic individuals and profit-seeking business corporations, that of power-hungry governments.

[61] The monk should, of course, be content with little (see § 25.1 + fns. 104 and 105); cp. also Tauscher 1989, 191.

[62] E.g., AN IV 281; cp. L.deSilva 1979, 13.

[63] The ideals are, rather, contentment (*saṃtuṭṭhi*) and — in the case of rich lay people — liberality (*cāga*). Being content with little and avoiding wastefulness (cp. also L.deSilva 1987, 15f) are, of course, attitudes favouring a moderate and careful utilization of nature. The *udumbara-khādikā* method blamed by the Buddha (AN IV 283), the method of shaking down an indiscriminate amount of fruit from a *Ficus glomerata* in order to eat a few, is precisely the same as the one employed in drift-net fishing (see § 14.5), where much more animals are killed than utilized.

[64] AN IV 281f. Cp. Palihawadana 1979, 36; L.deSilva 1987, 16.

II.B. Evaluation of Nature

17 We now come to the second part, the e v a l u a t i o n of nature, which is concerned not so much with single individuals as with nature as a whole and natural beings as such.

II.B.1. From the Point of View of the Ultimate Analysis of Existence

18.1 It has become fashionable to reject the view that Buddhism is escapist[65]. This may be fully justified in the case of Mahāyāna, or village Buddhism, or socially involved currents in modern Buddhism. But it is highly problematic to deny the existence and even predominance of detachment from the world in early monastic Buddhism. There can hardly be any doubt that in the canonical texts of Early Buddhism all mundane existence is regarded as unsatisfactory, either because suffering prevails or because, even when this is not the case, existence is inevitably impermanent. Therefore, the only goal ultimately worth striving for is Nirvāṇa, which, however one may have to understand it, was at any rate conceived of as entirely beyond mundane existence,[66] and hence beyond death and impermanence.

18.2 To be sure, this is not all. From the outset, there is also an attitude of turning towards the world. The later Mahāyāna ideal of remaining in the world for the sake of others has its roots in the standard set by the Buddha himself, who, after having himself attained salvation, turned to others as their teacher, out of compassion.[67]

18.3 But this additional feature of compassionate concern for others does not invalidate the afore-mentioned evaluation of all mundane existence as invariably unsatisfactory. And from the point of view of this evaluation, n a t u r e , too, cannot but be ultimately unsatisfactory; for it too is marked by pain and death, or at least by impermanence.[68]

18.4 On this level, there is, then, little motivation for conservation of nature. Sooner or later, natural things — individuals as well as species — will perish anyway. To put it in modern terms: After some millions or billions of years, the sun will

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[65] E.g., from quite different perspectives, Southwold 1983, 112ff., esp. 124, and D. E. Shaner in Callicott/Ames 1989, 169f + 312f (n. 23).

[66] I may disregard, in the present context, the belief that the relics of the Buddha are "living entities" (G. Schopen, Burial *'ad sanctos'* and the physical presence of the Buddha in early Indian Buddhism, in: Religion 17/1987, 203ff).

[67] However, interestingly enough, according to the well known legend (Vin I 4ff) the Buddha decided to do so only after some hesitation.

[68] Cp. Th 1133; AN IV 100ff; cp. also ŚrBh 483,2ff. Cp. also MPPU 191a26ff ($MPPU_L$ II 1068), telling a story in which the destruction of a forest arouses insight into universal impermanence.

anyway cool down or explode, and life on earth will come to an end.[69] The only thing one can do is to accept this unchangeable[70] truth with equanimity, and perhaps this is, in fact, in a few decades the only thing left to us if we fail to master the environmental crisis and even additionally accelerate it by modern forms of warfare.

18.5 Thus, the ultimate analysis of existence in early monastic Buddhism does not, to be sure, strongly motivate conservation of nature. But it does not encourage destruction or remodelling of nature in the name of so-called progress either. From its point of view, there is no progress. Technical or scientific progress may, in the long run, not even be able to reduce suffering (or may be able to do so only for man but at the expense of other living beings). But it will certainly not be able to abolish the fundamental reason for the ultimate unsatisfactoriness of mundane existence, i. e. its impermanence. Hence, the ultimate analysis of existence provided by Early Buddhism does not motivate destruction of nature for the sake of "progress" either,[71] still less so since its primary spiritual purpose is the extermination of egoism and greed, which are among the main reasons of the present destruction of nature.

18.6 The only reasonable attitude, on this level, is to leave things and creatures in peace,[72] and to regard all fellow-creatures with compassion and sympathy, and cautiously help them in case of emergency,[73] without damaging others.[74] This is in

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[69] To be sure, according to the traditional Buddhist cosmology, there is a beginningless and endless cyclical process of extinction and re-arising of the world. But on the level of ultimate evaluation of existence this is not felt comforting but on the contrary as underscoring the instability and unsatisfactoriness of existence, just like the beginningless and unending chain of (re)births and deaths of the individual.

[70] We are, so it seems, in a position to accelerate or anticipate the destruction of life on this earth, but we are not able to perpetuate its existence for ever.

[71] Cp. Schmithausen 1985, 113f.

[72] Cp. Ling 1979, 74; Kabilsingh 1987, 8 ("Buddhism's benefits to nature protection throughout the faith's history might be described as effective, in a largely passive role.").

[73] E.g., by gifts to animals (MN III 255), even such as throwing dish-water or remnants of food into a pool or river in order to feed tiny water animals or fishes (AN I 161; Jā II 423; cp. L.deSilva 1987, 18f), or by freeing, out of compassion, an animal from a rope or trap (Vin III 62f; cp. Schmithausen 1985, 119; McDermott 1989, 275f; Buddhaghosa seems to put more weight on the interests of the owner, entitling him to compensation (Sp 382f)) or redeeming captured animals (EncBuddh I, 291; 671; Schmithausen, ib.). — A Bodhisattva may even sacrifice his life for an animal (cp., e.g., the famous story of the hungry tigress: Jm_V ch. 1; Suvarṇabhāsottamasūtra, ed. Nobel, 201ff). Cp. also Śikṣ 200,15ff; EncBuddh I, 670(r).

[74] There are, of course, cases of conflict; cp. *Add.*, ch. III.

fact a fundamental attitude in Buddhist culture, and as long as the environment is intact, leaving nature alone is probably the best thing one can do.

18.7 Yet, it must be stressed that in the context of the ultimate analysis of existence this does n o t mean that nature or natural beings are accorded any ultimate value. This is definitely precluded by their very impermanence. For this reason, there is n o place for nature in the Early Buddhist N i r v ā ṇ a .[75] But of course there is none for man and his civilization either; he who enters Nirvāṇa can no longer be subsumed under any category of being whatsoever.[76]

II.B.2. From Intramundane Points of View

19 However, this ultimate unsatisfactoriness of a l l mundane existence is not, and probably never was, of much significance to Buddhist l a y followers (and may not be so to many monks either). For lay people, the i n t e r n a l differences between the various possible forms and circumstances of m u n d a n e existence are much more important. They do not strive for Nirvāṇa but for pleasant life and happy rebirth, be it on this earth or in heaven. And even for monks who train for spiritual perfection or have already attained it, different circumstances of life may have different relative value. It is interesting to see which value is, in the framework of such relative evaluation, accorded to n a t u r e . Actually, there are (at least) t w o almost c o n t r a r y evaluations:[77]

II.B.2.a. Pro-Civilization Strand

20 One is clearly in favour of c i v i l i z a t i o n . It would seem that this attitude (which is not restricted to Buddhists) is shared by most lay people — both

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[75] Cp., e.g., Ud VIII.1 and I.10 (cp. Schmithausen 1985, 103).

[76] Cp., e.g., Uv VI.10cd; L. Schmithausen, Der Nirvāṇa-Abschnitt in der Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī der Yogācārabhūmiḥ, Wien 1969, 49.

[77] Cp. also Aris 1990, 94-99; P.deSilva 1979, 83f (where he adds the two intramundane strands to the one I call that of ultimate analysis of existence); 1987, 41 (where he thinks that what I call the two intramundane strands "can be integrated and blended to form a viable Buddhist stance on nature, one which can be contrasted with the current aggressive, dominating and violent attitude towards nature"; but as I see them, they are, as they stand, hardly compatible, some aspects at least appearing mutually exclusive, so that integration is possible only if certain features of one strand or the other are either eliminated or at least confined to specific spiritual situations (cp. § 40.4)). — For the opposition between the inhabited area or the "village" (*grāma*) and the wilderness (*araṇya*) see, e.g., MN I 286; 472f; III 104). Cp. also Ch. Malamoud, Village et forêt dans l'idéologie brâhmanique, in: Archives Européennes de Sociologie 17.1/1979, 3-20; J. F. Sprockhoff, Āraṇyaka and Vānaprastha in der vedischen Literatur, in: Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens 25/1981, 31ff; G.-D. Sontheimer, The *Vana* and the *Kṣetra*, in: G.C. Tripathi / H. Kulke (eds.), Eschmann Memorial Lectures, I (Bhubaneswar 1978), 117ff, esp. 127ff and 143ff.

peasants and townspeople, perhaps with some nuances — and even by many monks.[78] To this attitude, w i l d nature, e.g. the virgin forest or the jungle, or high mountains and precipices, is something disagreeable and full of dangers[79] against which apotropaic rites are required and in fact supplied by popular Buddhism.[80] The ideal is rather a densely populated country, one village close to the other,[81] with 80.000 wealthy big cities full of people.[82] Even Nirvāṇa is occasionally, by way of a metaphor, called a c i t y .[83]

21 With this negative attitude towards (wild) nature, the conception of the s u p e r i o r i t y o f m a n over animals would seem to fit in well:

21.1 Firstly, animals are, to be sure, not entirely excluded from salvation. But there is the widespread view that for this purpose they have to be reborn as man because they lack discriminative intelligence (*prajñā*) and hence cannot attain liberating insight as long as they are animals.[84]

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[78] Cp., e.g., Dhp 99, Th 887f or SN I 180f (evaluation of *arañña* by ordinary people in contrast to persons free from passions). Even untrained monks are afraid of the wilderness: cp. Śikṣ 198,19f.

[79] Cp., e.g., DN I 73 = MN I 276; 378; SN III 108f; Vimānavatthu 77f; T vol. 14, 538c15ff (Lamotte 1962, 121); Ratnāvalī (ed. M. Hahn) I.13a; Sthiramati ad MSA IX.43 (Tj, sems-tsam, mi, 143a4); Kajiyama 1989, 32 (Vasubandhu). Cp. also Aris 1990, 95. — For the Vedic period, cp. W. Rau, Staat und Gesellschaft im Alten Indien nach den Brāhmaṇa-Texten dargestellt (Wiesbaden 1957), 53.

[80] Cp., e.g., Spiro ^{2}1982, 140ff.

[81] Similarly already in the Vedic period: cp. Rau, loc. cit. [see fn. 79].

[82] E.g., DN III 75; AN I 159f. Cp. SN II 106 (rich city full of people, but also furnished with parks and ponds, i.e. c u l t i v a t e d nature).

[83] E.g., Mil 333,2; LAS 155,1; 361,2; Apadāna 530. I have not noted any occurrence in the early canonical texts, but SN III 109 compares Nirvāṇa with an l e v e l piece of land (*samo bhūmibhāgo*) (whereas dense jungle, etc., represent, in this passage, unwholesome factors like ignorance!).

[84] Cp., e.g., Mil 32,25-27 (animals have *manasikāra* but not *paññā*); AKBh 349,15-17 (+ AKVy 541,6f), stating that the attainment of the "factors leading to liberation" (*mokṣabhāgīya*) is possible for humans only, not for animals, since they lack *prajñā*, and 346,18f, stating this for the first three *nirvedhabhāgīya* also; since a person who has attained the third *nirvedhabhāgīya* is not reborn as an animal any more (348,4ff), animals are automatically excluded from all higher attainments. Cp. also SN V 456f (No. 56.48); McDermott 1989, 270; D. Schlingloff, Die Religion des Buddhismus, II (Berlin 1963), 43. — For a similar view in Vedic and Hindu tradition: Halbfass 1991, 268ff; in Jainism: H. v. Glasenapp, Die Lehre vom Karman in der Philosophie der Jainas, Leipzig 1915, 70. — Contrary view: Tendai (see fn. 132). — That such an idea can become dangerous for nature became evident to me by when a Tibetan Lama argued in support of further growth of human

21.2 What is, however, more significant in our context is another idea, namely the view that existence as an animal is a very u n h a p p y one, much more painful than human existence.[85] One of the reasons is that animals are enslaved by man: used as vehicles, beaten and exploited.[86] This would seem to refer to domesticated animals. But another reason refers to wild animals, namely that one animal kills or devours the other, especially the weaker one.[87] This argument is also used to prove that animals are particularly malevolent[88] and hence even m o r a l l y inferior to man.

22 Since animals are thus considered to be extremely unhappy or even malevolent, the logical consequence is that their existence is ultimately undesirable. Though one should not kill them and should even treat them with compassion, since they are there after all, yet it would be better if there were none. And if they should happen to disappear from this world for some reason (as in fact many of them are on the point of doing), why ever not?

23.1 Consequently, in Buddhist i d e a l worlds, in paradises like Sukhāvatī, at least in the Indian conception of them,[89] there are n o a n i m a l s . Only birds (whose song one did not want to miss); but these birds are merely artificial products, not living beings.[90]

23.2 These paradises are extremely unnatural also in many other regards: without mountains, with q u a d r a n g u l a r ponds, crowded with people (all looking alike), and containing trees and flowers that are not living plants but, like the soil, made of j e w e l s (so that they do not whither, die and decay). Hence, these paradises (which seem to have parallels in mediaeval European thought) are clearly

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population for the reason that only as a human one can become a Buddha: the more the people the more the Buddhas — a fatal fallacy, I dare say.

[85] Cp., e.g., MN I 74f; III 169 (*na sukaraṃ akkhānena pāpuṇituṃ yāva dukkhā tiracchānayoni*); cp. also II 193f; Suhṛllekha vs. 89-90; Mahāyānasaṃgrahabhāṣya (Tj, sems-tsam, li) 152b6f; Vivṛtagūḍhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā (Tj, sems-tsam, li) 391b7f; EncBuddh I, 669(r).

[86] Y 87,14-16.

[87] Y 87,13f; EncBuddh I, 669(r). Cp. MBh 3.199.23f.

[88] MN III 169; Jm_V VI.3 (30,14: *jṛmbhitadaurātmyāḥ prāyaḥ ... mṛgāḥ*). Cp. also MPPU 156a4 ($MPPU_L$ II, 794); McDermott 1989, 270. But cp. also Gombrich 1971, 146.

[89] My reference is, to be more precise, merely to the wording of S ū t r a s like the Larger and Smaller Sukhāvatīvyūha, not to commentarial interpretations.

[90] Cp. Schmithausen 1985, 105-107.

in accordance with the attitude glorifying civilization.[91]

23.3 The Far Eastern conception may be somewhat different, but I must leave that to my colleagues. But it would seem to be still in line with the devaluation of nature-as-it-stands when a European Buddhist strongly influenced by Far Eastern Buddhism[92] emphasizes, to be sure, the necessity of "harmony with nature", but does so in the context of an "ecology of the mind"[93] which aims at a "purified" world with man as its steward, and at the same time criticizes what he calls "secular ecology" and the green movement for being distrustful of man, technology and the artificial world ahead of us. (I admit I share this distrust. Man is, so far, more likely to be the cancer of this world[94] than its saviour.)

24 The Buddhist tradition also supplies a mythological explanation of the origin of human civilization. To be sure, the early canonical version of this account[95] describes the evolution of human civilization in terms of decadence (of morality as well as happiness) rather than progress. But a Tibetan adaptation attributes the decisive step in the human conquest of nature, namely the introduction of agriculture, to the intervention of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.[96] And it seems that in India as well as in Tibet Buddhism did in fact contribute to the conquest of wild nature by culture and civilization; for not only planting parks (*ārāma*) and groves (*vana*) (cultivated nature!)[97] but also constructing wells, dikes and bridges is considered particularly meritorious.[98]

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[91] Ibid.; cp. T vol. 14, 538c20ff (Lamotte 1962, 122).

[92] Riccardo Venturini, A Buddhist View on Ecological Balance. Dharma World 17 (Mar./Apr. 1990), 19-23.

[93] In order to avoid misunderstandings: I do not deny that a change of man's behaviour towards nature presupposes a change in his mental attitudes.

[94] In the sense of being comparable to a dangerous excrescence in an organism, developed out of this organism itself.

[95] DN III 84ff (Aggaññasutta). Cp. L.deSilva 1979, 7; 1987, 11f.

[96] Aris 1990, 92f.

[97] Cultivated nature in the sense of groves, parks and gardens (*ārāma*, *uyyāna*, etc.) is a kind of intermediate sphere mostly connected with the domain of civilization (cp., e.g., SN II 106). — It seems that in the canonical Buddhist texts *vana* is often closely associated with, or part of, *arañña* (cp., e.g., MN I 17; 79; SN I 180; Th 244); but in the present context (SN I 33: see fn. 98) as also in some others (e.g., SN II 106; AN I 35) *vana* has preserved its original closeness to the sphere of civilization (for which cp. Sprockhoff, op. cit. [see fn. 77], 31ff and 84).

[98] SN I 33 (cp. L.deSilva 1987, 19f, where not only this passage but even Jā I 199 seems to be

II.B.2.b. Hermit Strand

25.1 This essentially anti-natural, pro-civilization attitude may well be one of the reasons why many Buddhist countries have offered so little resistance to the modern Western civilization that promised them a kind of Sukhāvatī on earth, or Golden Age, at a cost which so far has mainly been paid by wild nature. However, there has also been, since the time of Early Buddhism, a c o u n t e r - a t t i t u d e appreciating life in the solitude of w i l d n a t u r e .[99] This is the attitude of the forest-dwelling monk, the h e r m i t ,[100] who is no longer afraid[101] of the wild animals because he on his part does not threaten them but offers them safety and friendship;[102] who is happy in the solitude of the wilderness[103] because he has abandoned worldly desires and is content with little (*appossuka,*[104] *appiccha, santuṭṭha*[105]).[106]

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regarded as describing activities supporting nature, although the latter passage includes even the building of roads and the removal of trees for that purpose — activities which have, in my country, been among the most devastating); Aris 1990, 96; cp. Aśoka, Rock Edict II.

[99] Cultivated nature (see fn. 97) is usually not part of *araṇya/arañña* ("wilderness"), but from the point of view of Buddhist monks who may stay in both *arañña* and *ārāma*, etc., the distinction may not always be important.

[100] In the four Nikāyas as well as in the old verse texts of the Khuddakanikāya, most of which are for monks (and nuns), this attitude towards *araṇya* is by far the dominant one. Cp. also Kabilsingh 1990, 304.

[101] E.g., Vin II 184 (*abhīta*, etc.); VisM II 54 (*vigata-santāsa*).

[102] Cp. § 43.

[103] E.g., Vin II 183f; MN I 23; SN II 202f; VisM II 54-55.

[104] E.g., Vin II 184.

[105] E.g., DN I 71; SN II 202; AN III 219.

[106] It may be hazardous to connect the three strands of evaluation of nature (which I regard as genetically heterogeneous) with certain elements of Buddhist ethics. But one may safely say that the hermit or ascetic strand is, from its origin, closely connected with *ahiṃsā* towards, and probably also friendship (*mettā*) with, all living beings (cp. § 43). The civilization strand would seem to have an inborn tendency towards exploitation of nature and weakening inhibitions. And the ethical outflow of the traditional Buddhist analysis of existence would be detachment, unconcernedness, equanimity (*upekkhā*) and, if spiritual dissolution or extension of the Ego leads to an empathetic perception of the suffering of others, compassion (*karuṇā, dayā, anukampā*). This does not mean that the three strands stand in isolation, without having influenced each other. E.g., the tendency of the civilization attitude

25.2 Of course, remote places may also offer protection from social or political disturbances.[107] But the main motive for the Buddhist monk are the s p i r i t u a l benefits of wilderness. To be sure, nature in the form of biting and stinging insects can be a nuisance, but the hermit can learn to endure them,[108] and on the whole the solitude and silence of the wilderness is most favourable to m e d i t a t i o n .[109] The beauty of nature is enjoyed by the hermit without attachment.[110] Its contemplation is recommended especially to persons who need encouragement.[111] Natural things, especially p l a n t s , may even arouse discriminating insight by displaying i m p e r m a n e n c e , e.g., by the falling of leaves, the withering of flowers, or the change of the seasons.[112] The hermit may even take plants as a standard of spiritual perfection, in that they are not afraid of anything and free from desire or possessiveness or anger.[113]

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towards exploitation of nature has — more or less successfully (cp. §§ 12-13) — been tempered by incorporating, into lay ethics, the precept not to kill living beings including animals (*ahiṃsā*: hermit strand). Or, this same precept not to kill living beings has, in traditional Buddhism, by and large prevented compassion from assuming violent forms, whereas this may in fact happen in Mahāyāna (see *Add.* ch. III).

107 Aris 1990, 97. Cp. also DN III 73 (this passage belongs to the "pro-civilization" strand (cp. fn. 82); significantly enough, it presupposes that wilderness has survived even the worst period of deterioration of the earth).

108 Th 31.

109 E.g., Sn 221; VisM II.54; Schmithausen 1985, 109; L.deSilva 1987, 21 (with special reference to silence and noise); Tauscher 1989, 191. — This does not, however, mean that it is regarded as impossible to attain spiritual perfection in a village or city (cp. MN I 104ff).

110 E.g., Th 13; 113; 307-310; 1135-1137; BCA VIII.86. Cp. P.deSilva 1979, 84f; Schmithausen 1985, 109f; L.deSilva 1987, 24f; Tauscher 1989, 190. However, as regards the Theragāthās, the observations of S. Lienhard, Sur la structure poétique des Theratherīgāthā, in: Journal Asiatique 263/1975, 375ff, esp. 381ff., should not be ignored.

111 Vi 436b17f.

112 VisM II.58; ŚrBh 483,2ff; Vi 840b23ff. Cp. Schmithausen 1985, 108; P.deSilva 1987, 42. For the same idea in Japanese Buddhism (where it has, however, to be understood also in the context of § 30.3) cp., e.g., Shively 1957, 137f and 144, and W. Shirato, On Enlightenment Through Contemplation of "Fluttering Flowers and Falling Leaves" (in Jap.), in: Buddhist Seminar 39/1984, 39ff.

113 MPPU 682a10f; Śikṣ 199,3ff and 10f (cp. SWTF 141(r)); Lily de Silva in: G. Dhammapala, R. Gombrich, K.R. Norman (eds.), Buddhist Studies in Honour of Hammalava Saddhātissa, Univ. of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, 1984, 74.

25.3 In one passage, even Nirvāṇa is compared with a shadowy wood, in contrast to temporary heaven compared with a palace.[114]

25.4 Thus, the attitude of the Buddhist hermit towards nature, especially wild nature, is rather different from that of peasants and townspeople. To be sure, even h i s evaluation is not free from an anthropocentric element in so far as it is based on aspects like the suitability of wilderness for h i s spiritual progress. But even so in this attitude wild nature as a w h o l e , as an ambiance or e c o - s y s t e m comprising a specific set of s p e c i e s of animals and plants, is accorded a positive value, and on account of this positive evaluation it ought to be not only preserved but also r e s t o r e d (in case it has been destroyed for some reason).[115] From this point of view, the "hermit attitude" towards nature deserves, nowadays, to become, as a supplement to the traditional Buddhist ethics of not killing any living being and of compassion and benevolence, the attitude of a l l Buddhists. Indeed, it appears that this attitude is in fact an important element in the rise of ecological movements in some Buddhist countries.[116]

26 As for a n i m a l s , they are somewhat ambivalent for the hermit. On the one hand, he may enjoy their beauty[117] and treat them with compassion and friendship. On the other hand, unlike plants they cannot so easily be regarded as providing a standard for his spiritual perfection[118] since, indulging in sex and aggression, they are, as one text puts it, "untamed and undisciplined".[119]

27.1 In more popular texts, however, a more favourable evaluation of animals and animal existence is often found. In the Jātakas, animals — often the Buddha in a previous life — are frequently both happy and good.[120] In texts like the Tibetan Bya-

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[114] MN I 76f + Papañcasūdanī II 40. — In Thailand, even the c i t y of Nirvāṇa is sometimes painted with some animals and flowers around it (cp., e.g., K. Wenk, Thailändische Miniaturen (Wiesbaden 1965), 25; kindly brought to my attention by Prof. B. J. Terwiel). It should, however, be borne in mind that nature in this picture is more likely of the *ārāma* than of the *arañña* type.

[115] Cp., in this connection, the simile at MN I 117 where a man helps a flock of deer in a forest to recover after it had been decimated by another person. To be sure, this is merely a simile, but I for one cannot help feeling, emanating from it, some subtle, inexplicit sympathy for the deer and the person who helps them.

[116] Cp., as an example, the Ven. Buddhadasa in Thailand. Cp. also Kabilsingh 1990, 303ff.

[117] Cp., e.g., Th 13; 113; 307-309.

[118] But cp. Vin II 184 (*migabhūtena cetasā viharāmi*).

[119] Śikṣāsamuccaya 198,3f (cp. SWTF 141(r)).

[120] EncBuddh I, 668. Cp. also Vin II 161 (cp. McDermott 1989, 269 and 278 n. 7). — It is very

chos ("The Buddha's Law Among the Birds")[121], the birds listen to the Buddhist Doctrine preached to them by Avalokiteśvara who has assumed the form of a cuckoo.[122]

27.2 The e c o l o g i c a l interdependence between animals and their habitat is clearly perceived in the Tiger-Jātaka[123] where the emigration of tigers from a forest enables the f o r e s t being felled by wood-cutters, but also deprives the t i g e r s of their former habitat.[124]

27.3 To be sure, in most of these stories animals are, as often in fairy tales, largely anthropomorphized. But even so they are accorded value in their own right, and not depreciated wholesale as miserable and ill-mannered or evil creatures, and in view of the popularity of texts like the Jātakas this has probably exercised considerable influence on people's attitude towards animals in at least some Buddhist countries.

28 One cannot deny that in the animal world there is no little suffering and aggressiveness. But there is marvelous beauty, too, and we can hardly take for granted that animal existence is, on the whole, less happy and more painful than human existence. At any rate, the one-sidedly depreciative view of animals and wild nature in the "pro-civilization attitude" is certainly counterproductive in our present-day situation where wilderness and wild animals have lost the game against civilization, and where we begin to discover that by their destruction and extirpation the world, including ourselves, is going to suffer a terrible loss.

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interesting to see how this strand is adapted to or harmonized with that of the negative evaluation of animals in texts like Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā (cp., e.g., Jm_V p. 30,2f, 13f, 17ff and 22ff; p. 99,6f and 17) or the Avadānaṣataka (ed. Vaidya, 94f; cp. Halbfass 1991, 272 and 286 n. 31)). A systematic investigation of the matter in this text and in others of this genre may be rewarding.

[121] Trsl. E. Conze, Oxford 1955.

[122] According to the Great Amitābha Sūtra, even insects can direct their thoughts to being born in Amitābha's paradise (T vol. 12, 301b14ff; Kajiyama 1989, 6). According to the Khotanese Amitāyurdhyānasūtra (ed. Duan, unpubl. PhD diss., Hamburg, § 45), animals can, by listening to the Sūtra, attain the state of non-retrogression (*avaivartikatva*) and, finally, Supreme Awakening. — Aris (1990, 99) mentions a modern story from Ladakh in which all the animals of Ladakh hold a council where they try to discover a means of converting man from the terrible cruelty he inflicts on their world, and turn to a hermit who then converts people by preaching them compassion towards all creatures.

[123] Jā II 356ff.

[124] Cp. the verse Jā II 358,8f. Cp. Kabilsingh 1990, 303.

II.B.3. The Buddha-Nature of the Insentient

29 As Prof. Kamata has recently reminded us in a beautiful newspaper article,[125] there is, in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, a strong tradition of positive evaluation of, and harmony with, nature — which may be understood as a continuation of the "hermit strand" reinforced by Taoism as well as by the ancient Japanese love of nature. To be sure, we may have to distinguish, with Ienaga Saburō,[126] a kind of artificial nature, as in the Japanese art of gardening, from real nature. But even the former is still much more natural than paradises like Sukhāvatī, at least as they were conceived of in the Indian Pure Land Sūtras (see § 23.1-2).

30.1 The positive evaluation of nature in Far Eastern Buddhism would seem to have received a metaphysical foundation in the theory of universal interpenetration of all things[127] and by the theory of Buddha-Nature pervading all beings. The latter theory originated in India, where it was primarily intended to mean that all living, sentient beings, including animals but not plants, possess, from the very outset, Buddhahood in a hidden form or as a latent disposition (*tathāgatagarbha*).[128] This Buddha-Nature of sentient beings came to be equated with the all-pervasive true essence of everything (*tathatā* or *dharmatā*). In China from this (among other reasons) the idea was derived that even insentient beings like plants or even mountains, rivers, walls and tiles must contain Buddha-Nature.[129] This view was later on adopted and developed by Japanese masters, especially of the Shingon and Tendai schools.[130]

30.2 The theory that insentient beings like plants have Buddha-Nature does not

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[125] Chūgai Nippō, 23. 4. 1990, p. 1.

[126] Nihon shisōshi ni okeru shūkyōteki shizenkan no tenkai (Tokyo 1944); my information is based on LaFleur 1974, 228ff.

[127] Esp. in Hua-yen ("jewel-net of Indra") and T'ien-t'ai (mutual identity of mind and all things; cp. T vol. 75, 380b17ff; LaFleur 1973, 105); cp. also Kūkai's view of the eternal harmony or omnipresence of the six elements (including mind) (Shaw 1985, 115).

[128] Cp. D. Seyfort Ruegg, La théorie du Tathāgatagarbha et du Gotra, Paris 1969; J. Takasaki, Nyoraizō-shisō no keisei (Formation of the Tathāgatagarbha Theory), Tokyo 1974.

[129] Cp., e.g., Sakamoto 1980, xviif; ibid., 384ff; Miyamoto 1961, 683ff; Kamata 1965, 434ff; LaFleur 1973, 94ff; John Jorgensen, Sensibility of the Insensible: A Ch'an Poetic Genealogy (unpublished PhD diss., Canberra), Introd.

[130] Sakamoto 1980, xviii ff; 400ff; 414ff; Miyamoto 1961, 672ff; LaFleur 1973, 97ff. Cp. also Shively 1957; Nakamura 1980, 285f.

necessarily mean that they can actually become Buddhas.[131] But some masters do accept this, too,[132] and even declare that they too are in reality sentient.[133] Some even assert that plants are already Buddhas. This is, e.g., the position of the Tendai master Chūjin (1065-1138), according to whom plants are awakened to Buddhahood just as they stand.[134] There is no need for them to display the thirty-two marks: in their actual form itself — i.e. by having roots, stems, branches and leaves — each in its own way has Buddhahood.

30.3 According to the American Japanologist William LaFleur, this view of taking plants as they are to have actual Buddhahood means to attribute religious meaning and value to nature, i.e., to real, non-artificial nature.[135] And he goes on to show how nature judged thus is even experienced as soteric, i.e. as leading to salvation or religious awakening, in the poems of Saigyō (1118-1190): Plants and other forms of nature, in their spontaneity of life and in their acceptance of the truth of their own impermanence, "are to man as a 'master' or demonstrator of the way".[136]

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[131] E.g., Chi-tsang (549-623), T vol. 45, 40c23ff (Sakamoto 1980, xvii); Ch'êng-kuan (737-838), T vol. 36, 280a23ff, etc. (Kamata 1965, 447ff); Shōshin (?-1204?), acc. to Sakamoto 1980, xx and 416, and Miyamoto 1961, 681ff. The main reason adduced is that plants, etc., lack mind.

[132] This holds *a fortiori* good for animals: cp. EncBuddh I, 670(l).

[133] Cp., e.g., Annen (841?-?), T vol. 75, 487a26ff, attributing, to plants, the ninth form of mind, i.e. the *tathatā-citta* or immaculate mind, but accepting that even in plants this mind is, in principle, capable of developing into the ordinary forms of mind and may actually do so under certain circumstances, especially under the influence of a Buddha, so that even plants may practise the Way and become Buddhas (ib. 487c19ff; 484c2ff; for an earlier discussion of the matter by Annen, see Gisen Misaki, The essentials of Annen's Shinjō-Sōmoku-Jōbutsu-Shiki [in Jap.], in: Tendai Gakuhō 19/1977, 83ff; Fumihiko Sueki, Annen's theory of the attainment of Buddhahood by trees and plants [in Jap.], in: Tōhōgaku 80/1990, 97ff); Ryōgen, Sōmoku 346b9-12. Cp. also Chih-i, Mo-ho-chih-kuan (T vol. 46), 4a20ff, distinguishing three kinds of 心, out of which one, viz. reflecting and cognizing mind (*citta*), is, to be sure, expressly stated to be missing in plants; but they are regarded as possessing the second kind of 心, in this case taken as a translation of Skt. *hṛdaya*, which seems to be distinguished from the physical heart and is, by Chūjin (T vol. 74, 381a9f), characterized as the faculty to know the seasons for sprouting and growing. Besides, according to Chūjin, mind (*citta*) is not entirely absent in plants but — in contrast to the so-called sentient beings — merely not on the surface but "inside" (ib. a10-12).

[134] T vol. 74, 380b5f (cp. LaFleur 1973, 104ff); cp. also the position of Kūkai (LaFleur 1973, 98-100).

[135] LaFleur 1973, 110; cp. 1974, 232f.

[136] LaFleur 1974, 245; cp. 227ff; cp. also the references in fn. 112.

30.4 According to LaFleur, Saigyō's turning to real nature as a traditional Japanese value was (at least a l s o) motivated by the decline of the capital city, Heian-kyō, the cultural and civilizational center of that time.[137] If this is so, it may not be futile to expect a similar return of Japan to this traditional value in our times, as soon as the infatuation with Western civilization has given way to a critical awareness of its disastrous consequences.

31 Yet, from the point of view of the theory of Buddha-Nature, two problems at least would seem to require solution.

31.1 One is the problem of the consequences the view of the presence of Buddha-Nature even in plants, mountains and rivers entails for p r a c t i c a l behaviour. Actually, the earlier idea of the presence of Buddha-Nature also in a n i m a l s does appear to have played a role in the spread of vegetarianism among Mahāyāna Buddhists.[138] But if Buddha-Nature is present in p l a n t s , too, what remains for us to eat? The problem is actually raised by Chūjin: If plants are sentient beings (which is implied for him in their having Buddha-Nature), then cutting them would — contrary to the usual Buddhist view[139] — be an act of killing, i.e. bad karma![140] But Chūjin discards this idea. As he points out, the view that plants are endowed with mind, i.e. that the sentient and the insentient are not different, belongs to the ultimate standpoint of Tendai, and from this standpoint good and bad, or observing the precepts and breaking them, are not different either.[141] This would seem to mean that the theory is irrelevant to the everyday practice of ordinary people and hence of little significance to our present environmental crisis. Let us grant that in a truly perfect

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[137] LaFleur 1973, 111f.

[138] D. Seyfort Ruegg, Ahiṃsā and Vegetarianism in the History of Buddhism, in: Buddhist Studies on Honour of Walpola Rahula, ed. Somaratna Balasooriya et al., London 1980, 236ff. — As for the *tathāgatagarbha* idea as the basis of an ethical attitude in general, cp. RGV I.156ff, esp. 166f; cp. also Schmithausen 1985, 112.

[139] See §§ 10.1, 10.4 and 57 + fn. 284.

[140] T vol. 74, 381a22.

[141] T vol. 74, 381a23ff. — Cp. also T vol. 51 (No. 2076), 438b3ff, where the Chinese Ch'an master Nan-yang Hui-chung is asked why, if everything has the Buddha-Nature, injuring something insentient is not heard to entail karmic retribution, whereas killing a sentient being does; to this the master answers that killing or injuring a sentient being is an offence and has retribution because the sentient r e s e n t s being killed or injured, whereas the insentient does not. Cp. also ib. b12ff, where the statement that the whole earth (containing Buddha-Nature) is the body of the Buddha Vairocana (b10f) causes the interlocutor to remark that then all living beings would dwell on the body of the Buddha, would stain it with their excrements, and injure it by digging the ground and trampling on it. The master answers that since living beings are all Buddhas, there is nobody there to commit an offence.

person every action would s p o n t a n e o u s l y be in harmony with nature (if this is what Chūjin means). But in ordinary, imperfect persons (or such as merely deem themselves perfect) spontaneity is more likely to be disorientated or even to run riot.

31.2 And there is yet another difficulty: If Buddha-Nature, being identical with the true essence of a l l entities, pervades e v e r y t h i n g , it follows that not only natural beings but also products of c i v i l i z a t i o n possess Buddha-Nature, and not only walls and tiles, as some texts actually state,[142] but even cars, highways, dumping places, toxic waste, nuclear bombs, etc.[143]

31.3 If Buddha-Nature is nothing else but mere impermanence[144], this poses no problems, but once again the theory would turn out to be useless for establishing environmental ethics. Deriving environmental ethics from the idea of Buddha-Nature present in the so-called insentient would seem to presuppose that the presence of Buddha-Nature, or at least its f u l l or essentially u n s p o i l t presence, is somehow l i m i t e d to n a t u r a l things and beings, or at least n o t admitted for d e s t r u c t i v e or p o l l u t i v e elements of civilization; these may rather be regarded as a kind of "adventitious defilement" (*āgantuka kleśa*) (and a rather pernicious one at that) that has to be removed. This may, to be sure, run counter to the fundamental intention of at least part of the tradition concerned. But according to LaFleur, Saigyō, indeed, seems to have had some limitation of this kind in mind,[145] and another master, Ryōgen (912-985), though in one place stating that a l l d h a r m a s can form the resolution and carry out the spiritual practice [for Awakening],[146] may nevertheless, as LaFleur suggests,[147] have tended towards limiting Buddha-Nature to p l a n t s , since what (among the so-called insentient) he

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[142] E.g., T vol. 36, 280b1f (cp. Kamata 1965, 449); T vol. 85, 1289b8f (Kamata 1965, 438). The reason for mentioning walls, tiles, etc., is, of course, the passage MPSMah 581a22f, denying Buddha-Nature to insentient things like w a l l s , t i l e s and stones. — Cp. also extreme statements like the Ch'an master Yün-mên's equation of the Buddha with a dried up shit-stick (T vol. 48, 295c6).

[143] Cp., e.g., Masahiro Mori, The Buddha in the Robot (transl. Charles S. Terry), Tokyo: Kosei Publ. Co. ⁴1985 (1st ed.: 1981), 174; 179f; 182: "When we forget the buddha-nature in automobiles and other machines we have created, a warning comes to us in the form of accidents or pollution." Both will rather come anyway.

[144] Cp., e.g., Shaw 1985, 117ff (Dōgen).

[145] LaFleur 1974, 237ff, esp. 239. Cp. also the more general statement in LaFleur 1973, 97 ("... the Japanese after Kūkai seem to restrict their area of concern to the natural world — in distinction to that which is civilization — ...").

[146] Ryōgen, Sōmoku 345b16ff.

[147] LaFleur 1973, 103f.

expressly states to possess mind (i.e. to be sentient) is only plants[148] (but not stones, walls, etc.).

31.4 Even so, respect for them and protecting them would have to be, somehow, reconciled with the necessity to live on them, and perhaps even on animals if one has not the choice to live as a vegetarian.

III. Postface: Practical Suggestions for the Present Situation

32 My personal feeling is that such reconcilement is very difficult if not impossible. Plants are certainly not sentient in the same way as men or so-called higher animals. But they may not be entirely insentient either, and they are certainly alive.[149] We simply do not know what it means for a plant itself to live or to be injured or killed.

33 It may be safe to eat fruits since they are produced by the plant for precisely that purpose (which eventually leads to proliferation of seeds). And plants at least *survive* a certain amount of cutting their leaves or branches or even stems. And they produce seeds in abundance, as if "calculating" that many of them will be eaten. But the same is true of the offspring of many animals, and here we are definitely in the midst of killing. In most countries, it may be possible to abstain from meat and fish and hence avoid being involved in the killing of animals.[150] But few will be able to avoid being involved in the killing of plants, the "borderline case".

34 Probably, the most honest way is to accept the uncomfortable truth that one's own survival is possible only at other living beings' expense, but to try one's best to reduce the damage to a *minimum*. Perhaps, to live as a vegetarian (whenever possible). But what is, to my mind, much more important is to oppose and boycott, especially as consumers, all forms of *cruelty* to animals and destruction or deterioration of *eco-systems*. E.g., not to buy meat or eggs if the animals have been reared under unnatural or even cruel conditions.[151] Not to buy fish if the fishing is done in an unnecessarily cruel or in an insane, immoderate way, depleting the oceans, as e.g. driftnet fishing does. To buy, if possible, fruits and vegetables grown by natural methods of cultivation, without ecologically detrimental chemicals.

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[148] Sōmoku 346b9f.

[149] Cp. Chūjin's view mentioned in fn. 133.

[150] To be more precise: in the killing of animals for the sake of food. Of course, there are further reasons and causes for animals being killed (like traffic or medical research) — quite apart from indirect killing through destruction or pollution of eco-systems, let alone the problem of microscopic animals.

[151] Thus also G. Auster in: Yāna 38.1/1985, 28f (quoted in: Klöcker/Tworuschka 1986, 102).

Not to buy wasteful products. Not to buy or use cosmetics, etc., unless they have been developed without animal tests. Not to spoil the beauty of nature by carelessly dropping rubbish. To use polluting engines like cars, motor-cycles or planes as rarely as possible and rather take the train, the tram or the bicycle. To join or support organizations protecting nature. Not to vote for parties that are not reliably determined to stop the destruction of the environment. And, last but not least, to keep one's garden (if one has one) in a natural state, without using pesticides, preferring native plants instead of sterile short-cut lawns, tolerating wild flowers and even some so-called weeds, so that it offers shelter and food to insects, butterflies, birds, bats, frogs and all the other beautiful creatures with whom we should gladly share this world.

Additions to "Buddhism and Nature"

I. Traditional Buddhist Ethics and Environmental Ethics: Some Problematic Aspects

I.A. The Primacy of Spirituality and the Ethics of Intention

35 Not killing living beings or abstention from injuring them (*ahiṃsā*) is doubtless an important element of traditional Buddhist ethics, but as indicated in §§ 9ff it appears that it is, in Early Buddhism, conceived of in such a way that its demands remain within the limits of p r a c t i c a b i l i t y .[152] For l a y people, strict *ahiṃsā* — to be applied not only to animals but even to plants, soil and water — would in most cases (especially in the case of peasants, etc.) lead to impracticability of daily life to the extent of enabling survival only at the cost of constantly transgressing the *ahiṃsā* precept and accumulating the bad karma involved. In the case of m o n k s and nuns, who live on alms, survival without breaking the rule of *ahiṃsā* would be possible, if at all,[153] only at the cost of meticulously observing (as Jaina ascetics are in fact expected to do) a host of cumbersome restrictions; but this would have required the full attention of monks and nuns at almost every moment and would have diverted their energy from the main task, viz. spiritual progress by means of meditation and insight.

36 From the latter point of view, it would appear that, at least in Early Buddhism, *ahiṃsā* — and morality in general — has, for monks and nuns, primarily the function of a p r e c o n d i t i o n for higher spiritual achievements, a purificatory element, so to speak. This tendency is — in a form applicable to both monks and lay people, expressed very clearly in a statement by a contemporary Buddhist pointing out that doing harm to other living beings is spiritually counterproductive because it entails d e s e n s i t i z a t i o n .[154] To be sure, in Early Buddhism morality is not rendered superfluous by higher spiritual achievements but

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[152] In other words: in the case of *ahiṃsā* also, Buddhism tried to find a M i d d l e W a y . — The problem today is that details must be reconsidered in order to map out a Middle Way of *ahiṃsā* which is both practicable and effectual in our modern world with its ecological crisis and its anonymization of responsibility. § 34 contains a few suggestions for supplementing the traditional *ahiṃsā* pattern.

[153] Acc. to MBh 3.199.29 (cp. Alsdorf 1961, 587), complete *ahiṃsā* is not possible even for an ascetic; for the whole world is full of animate beings (*prāṇin*: 23); there are lots of living beings (*jīva*) in soil (19), water and trees (22), and plants and seeds are themselves living beings (*jīva*: 20). In B u d d h i s m , the problem is reduced by largely disregarding, and finally denying, the animateness of water, soil and plants (cp. § 9ff).

[154] Palihawadana 1979, 36f. Cp., in this connection, also P. de Silva's (1979, 79) suggestion that from a general psychological point of view an intact environment is conducive to gentleness and serenity, whereas a polluted and deteriorated one breeds vandalism and aggression.

preserved, as a matter of course, also by a perfected person.[155] Yet it may well be that its somewhat subordinate function is one of the reasons for a certain instability on account of which morality could lose its relevance for the perfected person in some forms of Tantric and Far Eastern Buddhism (see § 59). Besides, from the point of view of nature the tendency to subordinate the precept not to kill living beings to one's own spiritual progress doubtless constitutes a kind of subtle anthropocentrism.[156]

37 It fits in with the subordination of morality and especially abstention from killing (and injuring) living beings to one's own spiritual progress that there is a tendency in Buddhism to restrict guilt — in the karmic sense as well as in the sense of disciplinary offences — to intentional acts of killing (and injuring).

37.1 On the one hand, this emphasis on intention would seem to establish as unacceptable all more or less conscious acts of indirect killing as they are not infrequently observed in Buddhist countries, like avoiding direct, bloody killing of fishes by letting them die out of water (§ 13). For in this case the intention is clearly to put them to death. At any rate when one takes them out of water one clearly knows that they will die thereby, and "intentional" is, in the texts, occasionally expressly explained as "knowingly".[157]

37.2 In the context of environmental ethics, a similar case would be the use of insecticides, at least as long as the person using them, though not directly swatting "vermins", nevertheless knows that they are going to die on account of his application of insecticides.

37.3 On the other hand, such cases are to be distinguished (though the border-line may not always be sharp) from others where injuring living beings is not intended at all by the perpetrator but merely a side effect of the action, as, e.g., the injuring of small animals like dew-worms in the course of traditional agricultural activities like ploughing, of which peasants are, to be sure, aware but which they cannot avoid. It seems that this injuring is sometimes played down as unintentional,[158] sometimes admitted as inevitable bad karma.[159] In most cases concerning the present day destruction of nature the situation is similar (provided that we ignore the difference

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[155] Explicitly so ŚrBh 265,2-6: the three *śikṣās*, i.e., *śīla*, *samādhi* and *prajñā*, forming, so to speak, three steps of a stair-case in which all the lower steps continue to subsist as bases underlying the higher.

[156] Cp. also Bruno Nagel, Vergankelijkheid en de waarde van de natuur in het Boeddhisme, in: Speling 41.4/1989, 57 (with an attempt to overcome the difficulty).

[157] E.g., Vin III 73; IV 124 (*sañcicca ti jānanto* ...).

[158] Maithri Murthi 1986, 48.

[159] Ibid.; Gombrich 1971, 245.

in degrees of inevitability of the actions themselves). For, in cases like polluting water, clearing forests, spraying herbicides or fungicides or driving motor-cars, one may argue that the i n t e n t i o n is only to get rid of sewage, to cut wood or gain land for cultivation, to protect crops from so-called weeds, and to move around quickly, but not at all to kill animals. In many cases the perpetrator may n o t even be a w a r e that their death is, indirectly, entailed by his action. At least in this case, his guilt would, from the point of view of an "ethics of intention", be zero or minimal.[160]

37.4 Though the Vinaya is concerned with monastic discipline, which is not identical but only overlaps with morality proper, it is interesting to see that it too points to the same direction. Occasionally, to be sure, monks are exhorted to prevent unintended and unexpected accidents by carefulness.[161] But mostly, and even in cases where we would speak of gross negligence, the Vinaya tends to exonerate a person from the offence of killing if it was unintentional.[162] And although a monk is guilty of a *pārājika* offence (namely: murder) even if the victim dies from the injury at a l a t e r time only, he is n o t guilty of such an offence if the death is only i n d i r e c t l y connected with the injury, e.g. if the victim dies of a disease contracted because his immunity had been weakened by the injury.[163]

37.5 Such passages show a tendency to limit responsibility to i n t e n t i o n a l actions with a p r i m a r y causal relation to the damage. This principle is, however, not suited to our present-day environmental problems which are usually mere by-products, often unexpected ones, of activities aiming at quite different things. In order to cope with this situation, it is not only necessary to stigmatize as unethical activities entailing unintended but well-known damage, but it is also inevitable to realize that it is of vital ethical relevance to calculate, b e f o r e any action, the r i s k s and consequences it involves for other living beings, and also to acquire the

160 Cp. Schmithausen 1985, 117f; Tauscher 1989, 194.

161 Vin III 79; T vol. 23, 10b29ff (cp. Rosen 1959, 56); Sp 865: *kāruññaṃ upaṭṭhapetvā a p p a m a t t e n a vattaṃ kātabbaṃ.*

162 Cp. Vin III 85 where killing people by setting fire to a forest is stated to be n o offence when unintended, or Sp 454 where it is stated that when a monk (!) has dug a pitfall f o r a c e r t a i n p e r s o n he incurs n o offence if a n o t h e r man falls into it and dies (*aññasmiṃ patitvā mate anāpatti*); cp. also Sp 455f (*manussaṃ odissa khate yakkhādīsu patitvā matesu anāpatti*) and 457 (*odissa kate yaṃ odissa oḍḍito, tato aññesaṃ bandhane anāpatti*). Sp 865 (cp. also fn. 161), however, presents an unambiguously ethical criterion, stating that the decisive element turning killing into an offence is lack of compassion. — A detailed investigation of this complex of problems would be interesting but exceeds the limits of this paper.

163 Sp 455f.

k n o w l e d g e required for such a calculation.[164]

38 This holds good also for unintentional killing by c o n s u m p t i o n . According to the Vinaya, a monk is allowed to accept meat or fish provided that he has not seen, heard or suspected that the animal was expressly killed for him.[165] But at least in modern societies and economies slaughtering of animals and, what is perhaps worse, cruel forms of rearing them are largely committed for the sake of money, and hence their extent is largely determined by consumer demand. Hence, the animals are killed for the a n o n y m o u s c o n s u m e r , and whoever — monk or lay person — consumes meat or fish is one of them, and thereby inevitably encourages the production of meat involving killing.[166] This has, by the way, already been clearly recognized by the Laṅkāvatārasūtra: "If nobody ate meat, nobody would kill for that purpose, for mostly innocuous animals are killed for the sake of money."[167] The same logic applies to all kinds of consumption of things the production of which involves deterioration of environment. The consumer is as responsible as the producer and the dealer,[168] at least as long as he has alternative choices.

I.B. Protection of Species and Eco-Systems

39.1 Stating the traditional Buddhist attitudes of not injuring (*ahiṃsā*), benevolence (*mettā/maitrī*) and compassion (*karuṇā*) to entail an "ecological" behaviour, is surely justified in so far as these attitudes are not limited to human beings as their object but include also other living beings, especially a n i m a l s . Still, it should be clear that neither of these attitudes has, primarily, an "ecological" purport. For they clearly refer to i n d i v i d u a l animals, n o t to s p e c i e s , or to whole e c o s y s t e m s or landscapes.[169] What counts, in this connection at least, is not,

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[164] Cp. Hans Jonas, Das Prinzip Verantwortung, Frankfurt/M. 1979, 28.

[165] Vin I 237f; MN I 368f; cp. also Vin II 197 and III 171f. Cp. Alsdorf 1961, 562ff; M. Shimoda in: Bukkyō Bunka 22/1989, 1ff, esp. 7ff (with further references on p. 16 n. 1).

[166] This line of argumentation is also set forth by the Ven. Piyasilo in: The Nearer the Bone, the Sweeter the Meat? (Petaling Jaya 1989), 22f.

[167] LAS 252,15ff. Cp. also Manu V.48 and MBh XIII.116.26 (cp. Alsdorf 1961, 561) and, esp., 29 (kindly pointed out to me by S.A. Srinivasan).

[168] For the responsibility of the latter, cp. AN III 208, prohibiting even laymen from dealing with meat, sentient beings, poison, weapons or alcohol.

[169] Even if p l a n t s are included (see § 10.1-2), concern is, originally, for i n d i v i d u a l plants. Of course, by including plants — and still more so if even the earth (cp. *Plants* § 15.1ff) or (as with the Jainas) other elements are included — protecting individuals p r a c t i c a l l y comes

e.g., the diversity or beauty of nature; it is solely animals as living and sentient individuals that count. Therefore, it would seem that, from the point of view of the above-mentioned attitudes, active measures for the conservation of species and for the protection or even restoration of eco-systems can only be argued for if they can be shown to be corollaries of the protection of individuals.

39.2 At first glance, this appears to be quite easy. But it turns out not to be a matter of course at all if we take into consideration that at least on the doctrinal level Buddhism (as also Jainism[170] and Hinduism[171]) normally asserts that existence as an animal is a particularly u n h a p p y one, at least if compared with human existence (see § 21.2). This view is, to be sure, compatible with the attitude of not injuring, etc., with regard to already existing animals. For since these animals are already there, a Buddhist should not kill them, because they still want to live, like himself,[172] or because on account of the karma doctrine killing them would merely postpone their suffering to another existence, or simply because killing is bad karma,[173] or spiritually pollutive or disadvantageous,[174] for the killer himself. All a Buddhist can and ought to do is rather to try to alleviate their lot by treating them with benevolence and compassion, because they too enjoy pleasure and recoil from pain just as oneself.[175] But if existence as an animal is particularly painful, there is, from the point of view of the a n i m a l s t h e m s e l v e s , little meaning in endeavours aiming at perpetuating the conditions under which animals, or certain species of them, c o n t i n u e to be born i n f u t u r e .[176] Actually, as pointed out in § 23.1, in ideal worlds like the Sukhāvatī of early Indian Mahāyāna there are no (real) animals. And according to some schools cyclical ameliorations of the

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close to protecting whole eco-systems. But the fundamental difference of the ideological starting-point will assert itself as soon as situations of conflict arise (see § 39.3).

170 H. v. Glasenapp, Der Jainismus (Berlin 1925), 188.

171 Explicitly so, e.g., Medhātithi, Kullūka and Govindarāja ad Manusmṛti XII.77; cp. also P.V. Kane, History of Dharmaśāstra, IV (Poona [2]1973), 153f (implicit evidence only).

172 Cp. Sn 704-705; Dhp 129f; VisM IX.10; MPPU 155b13-15 and c19-21 = $MPPU_L$ II, 789 and 793.

173 Cp. § 8.1.

174 Cp. § 36.

175 See § 8.1 + fn. 17.

176 I refrain from discussing further sophistications, like the argument that benevolence may include offering animals the opportunity to propagate (irrespective of the fact that for the offspring existence is painful), or that due to their karma a certain amount of living beings will be reborn as animals anyway.

circumstances in this world (which according to the Buddhist tradition[177] are, by the way, based on moral and spiritual, not technical, progress)[178] culminate in the disappearance of all animals (followed, it is true, by a disappearance of humans also) because all living beings gradually ascend to higher forms of existence.[179]

39.3 To be sure, as long as the natural balance is not disturbed, protecting individual animals would automatically imply protection of species, the more so since, at least in theory,[180] the attitude of not injuring is prescribed with regard to a l l animals, including such as are regarded as "noxious" by man[181] and even tiny insects, etc.[182] Even nowadays, when this balance has already been considerably disturbed by human intervention, offering safety and shelter to individual animals may automatically preserve species if the individuals protected happen to belong to

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[177] Y 34,11ff; AKBh 178,12ff; T vol. 1, 137b16ff; 409c22ff; cp. DN III 73ff.

[178] Likewise, deterioration of the external world is dependent upon moral decadence (DN III 84ff; Y 184,6ff; cp. DN III 68-70). — Similarly, contemporary Buddhists often stress that the most important thing, also in connection with the modern destruction of nature, is that people purify their m i n d s (cp., e.g., L.deSilva 1987, 27; Cromwell Crawford in: Radical Conservatism, 166; Allan Hunt Badiner in: Dharma Gaia, xvii ("Meditation is its [i.e. Buddhism's] primary tool for raising ecological consciousness.")). Some authors stress, however, that in view of the unprecedented challenge of the present situation this should not preclude active responsibility; cp., e.g., St. Batchelor in: Dharma Gaia, 182; Ch. Kabilsingh 1987, 8. The latter (1990, 308) even expresses the idea that "a person cannot be truly peaceful within unless he helps to bring about peace in the world outside as well."

[179] T vol. 1,137c4+9; Y 34,18(ff); AKBh 178,11f (stating that wild animals disappear first, whereas the domesticated disappear only together with man).

[180] In everyday practice, the degree to which the precept is observed varies, of course, considerably, especially in the case of lay people, and not only from person to person but also from one social group to other and from one Buddhist country to other (cp., e.g., Maithri Murthi's (1986) description of the traditional Ceylonese situation with the behaviour of Buddhist peasants in Thailand as described in Terwiel 1972, 340f).

[181] See fn. 204.

[182] In connection with the precepts for l a y people, cp., e.g., Herbert Härtel, Karmavācanā, Berlin 1956, p. 54; DhSk$_D$ p. 80 (v10): *antataḥ kuntapipīlakam api*; cp. also Y 172,4 (read *antataḥ kuntapi°*); however, in the Pāli version of the Sūtra quoted in these texts, e.g. MN I 286, there is no explicit reference to ants. In connection with m o n k s : Vin I 97 (*antamaso kuntha-kipillikaṃ upādāya*); The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu, ed. R. Gnoli, II (Rome 1978), 232,11f. Cp. also the minute animals (*pāṇa(ka)*) which for a monk render water unsuitable for drinking (Pāc. 62) or sprinkling (Pāc. 20) or necessitate the use of a strainer (Vin II 118f). It would seem that (small?) ants (*kunthakipillika*) and animals visible in water or being caught in a strainer mark a kind of limit beyond which animals were either not expected to exist or disregarded because of impracticability (but cp. McDermott 1989, 271 + 278 n. 22).

endangered ones.[183] But as stated above, as long as the view of the peculiar unhappiness of existence as an animal is upheld, arguing, on the basis of not injuring, etc., for active measures to re-establish a species on the verge of extinction would seem to be quite problematic. And even irrespective of the idea of the particular unhappiness of existence as an animal, almost unsurmountable difficulties arise in case the preservation of one species should necessitate the killing of individuals of another, intrusive one (see § 1.3). For at least in traditional ("Hīnayāna") Buddhism, the prohibition to kill or injure living beings is categorical (see § 50).

39.4 Similarly, destruction or pollution of eco-systems is, to be sure, clearly in contradiction with Buddhist ethics since it entails the killing or at least the displacing of many individual animals. This is expressly stated in an explanation of the precept, for monks and nuns, not to injure plants, according to which plants should not be destroyed because they are the abode of animals like insects (§ 11.2).[184] It is also clear from the prohibition to throw remnants of food, especially indigestible or dangerous ones, into water containing (i.e. inhabited by) tiny animals.[185] Even if these prohibitions are mainly[186] for monks (and nuns), they cannot be ignored by lay people either since they expressly or implicitly base the prohibition to destroy or pollute an eco-system upon the prohibition to kill or injure animals, which latter is valid for lay people as well. Accordingly, the Indian Buddhist emperor Aśoka[187] forbids burning chaff containing animals,[188] and needless or malevolent burning of forests; and it is of course primarily to lay people that he addresses himself, as is also clear from the fact that he prohibits only needless or malevolent burning of forests; for not allowing any form of burning forests would have rendered it impossible for people to cultivate new ground, which may not have been Aśoka's intention.

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[183] Cp. the effect of *abhayadāna* by monasteries in Thailand mentioned in Kabilsingh 1990, 308, and especially 1987, 7.

[184] Note that under the presupposition implied in this re-motivation of the prohibition to injure plants, viz. that the plants themselves are not sentient beings, one could, from an ecological point of view, reverse this argument in the case of, e.g., ecologically counterproductive monocultures (i.e., one could argue that they should (or at least: may) be destroyed because (or: in case) they are no longer an abode of animals.

[185] Vin I 157, etc.; MN I 13; Sn p. 14; SN I 169. See *Plants* § 11.1ff.

[186] At SN I 169 the person addressed is, however, a brahmin; at Sn p. 14, even a brahmin living on agriculture.

[187] Pillar Edict V.E-F.

[188] Cp. Maithri Murthi 1986, 47, reporting that in traditional contemporary Sri Lanka fallen leaves of trees are burnt only if the absence of small animals has been made sure of.

39.5 On the other hand, r e s t o r a t i o n of degraded eco-systems to a natural condition is not so easily justified since it would normally lead to an increase of animals, i.e., augment the number of beings existing as animals, which can hardly be accepted as desirable as long as the idea that animal existence is especially painful is clung to.

40.1 In these circumstances, one may try to solve the problem by turning to anthropocentric considerations.[189] Even a Buddhist may argue that protection of the environment, including active measures for the conservation or re-establishment of species, in its turn requiring conservation or even restoration of eco-systems, is indispensable for the future existence, or at least comfortable existence,[190] of m a n ; for in Buddhism h u m a n existence is, in spite of the suffering it involves, valued as a g o o d form of existence (*sugati*), and the only one at that in which one is capable of liberating insight.

40.2 One might also argue that destruction, pollution or impoverishment of nature (i.e., of species and eco-systems) is unfavourable for man's own s p i r i t u a l p r o g r e s s , i.e. one may recur to the desensitization argument (see § 36) or to the attitude towards nature of the "hermit strand" (see §§ 25.2 and 25.4).

40.3 To be sure, such anthropocentric ways of arguing may be acceptable with regard to vegetation and the elements if the usual Buddhist view that these are insentient is followed. But they are problematic in the case of animals if the idea that their existence is excessively painful is retained. Does the alleged higher status of human existence justify the safeguarding of the existence of f u t u r e animals if their existence is useful only for men but painful for these future animals themselves? Would this not ultimately amount to an albeit sublimed version of the fatal view that animals are there merely, or at best primarily, to serve the needs of man?[191] If man were entitled to make them suffer for promoting his own salvation, could one not likewise argue that he is also entitled to do so, by animal experiments, in order to promote human health? But would this really fit in with the c a t e g o r i c understanding, in traditional Buddhism,[192] of the prohibition to kill or injure a n y sentient being? What would have been the answer of ancient masters like Vasuban-

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[189] Anthropocentric considerations are also prominent in the pertinent speeches on the Sixth IYY International Speech Festival 1990/91 published by The Reiyukai, Tokyo 1991, esp. pp. 19f (Komal Oli, Nepal) and 33f (Sujaree Niyomsuk, Thailand).

[190] Cp., e.g., P.deSilva 1979, 87f.

[191] This view is expressly rejected by the German Buddhist G. Auster (in: Yāna 38.1/1985, 28f; quoted in Klöcker/Tworuschka 1986, 101f), who states that animals, though inferior to man, are nevertheless not created for man but a form of life on an equal right with him.

[192] See § 50ff.

dhu[193] or Buddhaghosa[194]?[195]

40.4 It would thus seem that the decisive problem for a Buddhist motivation of active measures of conservation and restoration of nature is the view, predominant on the doctrinal level, that animal existence is particularly unhappy. To be sure, existence as an animal (and perhaps even as a plant) is, even in open nature, doubtless not a paradisic one; there is stress and frustration, ghastly pain and agony. But since, at least as long as their suffering is not increased by man through relentless persecution, captivation, exploitation and cruel experiments, it is hardly demonstrable that animals are, on the whole, more unhappy than humans, it would seem preferable to abstain from comparative evaluation of the quality of their life. Perhaps we should rather concentrate on the fact, not ignored by the Buddhist sources either, that after all animals cling to life and, sometimes at least, even seem to enjoy it. Hence, I suggest that the idea of the particular unhappiness of existence as an animal should be relegated to specific spiritual contexts where stressing their suffering is helpful, e.g. in order to stimulate human moral or spiritual effort[196] or compassion, but should no longer be advocated as a doctrinal element.[197]

II. The Five Precepts in the Context of a Community of All Living Beings

41 The Five Precepts can, to be sure, on the one hand be viewed as benefitting the individual keeping them, be it by preventing him from committing bad karma and protecting him from the evil consequences entailed, be it by contributing to his spiritual purity and development.[198] On the other hand, the choice of the actions prohibited — murder, theft, adultery,[199] false speech,[200] intoxication[201]

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[193] Cp. § 50.1f.

[194] Cp. § 50.3.

[195] For the answer of a European Buddhist see, e.g., G. Auster in: Yāna 38.1/1985, 28f (see fn. 191) who rejects animal experiments except for vital medical purposes provided that such experiments are actually indispensable.

[196] As would seem to be the purpose of, e.g., MN No. 129.

[197] In fact, as far as I can see the idea of the particular unhappiness of existence as an animal is almost never mentioned in contemporary Buddhist attempts to show that Buddhism supports an ecological attitude and favours conservation of nature.

[198] Cp., e.g., AN III 211ff (esp. *khīṇanirayo 'mhi*, etc., *sotāpanno ... sambodhiparāyaṇo*, and *avisuddhassa cittassa visuddhiyā apariyodātassa cittassa pariyodapanāya*).

[199] According to AN III 210: sexual intercourse with the wives and daughters of others. Cp. also the

— leaves little doubt that the Five Precepts have also a s o c i a l function, as is also clear from the fact that the texts point out that transgression of these precepts is avenged not only in the yonder world but also by secular authorities (the king).[202] If accepted by all members of society, the Precepts constitute a kind of mutual consent to refrain from major infringements upon each other's vital interests.

42 However, at least at first glance it would seem that the fact that the first Precept has, no doubt, been understood, from the very outset, to include the prohibition to kill a n i m a l s does not fit in with this purpose of consolidating human society since it holds good c a t e g o r i c a l l y , for a l l animals, i.e. also for animals serving as human f o o d ,[203] and even for such as are n o x - i o u s or at least a nuisance to man.[204] Hence it even seems to be c o u n t e r - p r o d u c t i v e to human interests.[205] But the matter becomes intelligible on the assumption that the Five Precepts regulating the moral behaviour of Buddhist lay people have, to a certain extent at least, been formulated under the influence of the moral rules for monks, i.e., a s c e t i c s , and that they are a kind of mitigated application of the latter to the requirements of the secular world.[206] In the morali-

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more detailed list at MN I 287, etc.

[200] Acc. to AN III 210: destroying [others'] welfare, i.e causing them a loss, through false speech. According to MN I 288 (in the context of the tenfold righteous behaviour of a lay person): false testimony.

[201] Acc. to AN III 211: misuse of spirituous liquor leading to the other four prohibited actions (murder, etc.). — It should be noted that this precept is missing in the list of the ten major moral commandments for a monk (e.g., DN I 4) as well as in the corresponding guideline for lay people (e.g., MN I 287f).

[202] AN III 208-211.

[203] AKBh 241,1.

[204] Thus expressly AKBh 240,21+24, discarding, as resulting from misorientation (*moha*), the idea of certain people that it is a l l o w e d to kill animals noxious to man (*manuṣyāṇām upaghātakāḥ*) like snakes, scorpions or wasps (*tryambuka*; AKVy 403,9: = *varaṭa*; cp. Lindtner 1988, 440 n. 24); AKVy and Vi 605c15 add tigers, etc.

[205] This aspect appears to have been overlooked in v. Simson's (otherwise convincing) statement that a morality based on benevolence towards a l l l i v i n g b e i n g s and radical abstention from violence must have appealed especially to merchants interested in the abolition of inter h u m a n and inter c u l t u r a l barriers (Georg von Simson, Der zeitgeschichtliche Hintergrund der Entstehung des Buddhismus und seine Bedeutung für die Datierungsfrage, in: H. Bechert (ed.), The Dating of the Historical Buddha, Göttingen, Pt. 1, 1991, 94).

[206] Cp. Sn 393; cp. also Sn 396, stating that even lay people — just as monks — had better completely

ty[207] of renouncers and ascetics, abstention from killing animals (and even plants) was firmly rooted as the heritage of an earlier cultural stratum — a stratum in which killing animals (and even plants,[208] earth[209] and water[210]) was, in a sense at least, as serious as killing people (not of course of one's own ethnic group), because animals, too, were believed to take, if possible, revenge on the killer in the yonder world[211] (or to be avenged by their kin here itself)[212]. The very idea of animals taking revenge, and the idea that, unless one believes to be able to counteract their revenge (by ritual means), one has — and this is what the renouncers and ascetics have done — to abstain from killing them and offer them safety for safety (*a-bhaya*),[213] would seem to indicate a kind of s o c i a l relationship with them. In the case of a renouncer and ascetic living in the wilderness (*araṇya*) one may even say that it is p r i m a r i l y the wild animals (and plants) that constitute his society, so to speak.

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desist from sexual intercourse, but if unable to do so must at any rate abstain from violating others' wives.

[207] I have no serious reserves against using this term, or the term "ethics", in this context because, on the one hand, I do not understand "morality" or "ethics" in the narrow sense referring to inter h u m a n behaviour only and because, on the other, I find it difficult to exclude a pattern of behaviour from the sphere of ethics merely because its main motive may be f e a r ; for even in the so-called Higher Religions as well as in our own secular society ethical behaviour is, to a considerable extent, doubtless motivated by fear, transgressions being menaced with p u n i s h m e n t either in this world or in the other.

[208] Schmidt 1968, 644f; cp. 647f.

[209] Ibid., 648.

[210] Śatapathabrāhmaṇa 11.6.1.11.

[211] Schmidt 1968, 643ff; cp. also 636 (Manu 6.40). — In both Vedic and post-Vedic Hindu sources, retaliation of injury is sometimes concretized as retaliation of e a t i n g (Schmidt 1968, 644ff; 629 (Manu 5.55); Alsdorf 1961, 590 n. 2 (MBh [Bombay] 13.116.28f)).

[212] Thus probably AN IV 246 (see fn. 216), and doubtless AN II 72f = Vin II 109f (see fn. 218) in connection with *mettā*, and Vin I 219f (see fn. 216) in connection with eating the meat of certain animals. Cp. also MBh [Bombay] 13.116.23-25; TattvBh VII.4 (*hiṃsro hi nityodvejanīyo nityānubaddhavairaś ca*, which I understand to mean that a person who injures others is always shunned by them and pursued by t h e i r enmity).

[213] Schmidt 1968, 643ff; 648f; 651. For post-Vedic Hindu sources, ib. 636 (Manu 6.40); Alsdorf 1961, 590 (MBh [Bombay] 13.116.23-25).

43 That such an interpretation is applicable to earliest Buddhism would seem to be confirmed by the fact that "giving safety" (*abhaya-dāna*, i.e, de facto, *ahiṃsā*[214]) and even the practice of benevolence (*mettā*, lit. "friendship") are, even in Buddhist texts, occasionally expressly characterized as involving a m u t u a l relation,[215] a kind of mutual non-aggression pact or friendship treaty between the ascetic and certain species of, or all, (wild) animals: He who gives safety to countless sentient beings receives, in his turn, safety from them,[216] and snakes and other dangerous animals do not bite or injure him who encompasses them with friendship[217] or benevolence.[218]

44 From this point of view it seems that also in the first Precept, and hence also for a Buddhist lay person, society is not to be taken in the narrow sense of h u m a n society, but in a broader sense of a community comprising a l l living or s e n t i e n t beings,[219] including, at any rate, the animals. Such a community or solidarity of all sentient beings is frequently grounded on the fact that all of them cling to life and are afraid of death, and long for happiness while shrinking from pain, just like oneself.[220] Occasionally, we even find the (probably somewhat later) idea that in the course of the beginningless series of former lives all living beings have

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[214] Schmidt 1968, 636.

[215] Cp. also P.deSilva 1987, 46f.

[216] AN IV 246: *pāṇātipātā paṭivirato ... ariyasāvako ... sattānaṃ abhayaṃ deti, averaṃ deti ...; ... sattānaṃ abhayaṃ datvā averaṃ datvā ... abhayassa averassa ... bhāgī hoti.* Cp., in this connection, also the fact that Buddhist monks are prohibited from eating the meat (cp. fn. 211) of dangerous animals like snakes because these may take revenge (Vin I 219f) or of beasts of prey like lions, tigers, etc., because these (i.e. other lions, etc.) may attack the monks on account of the smell of the meat they have eaten (Vin I 220; cp. McDermott 1989, 274).

[217] In view of the contract-like character of *metta* (neuter, not usual fem.!) in the present passage I for one have serious doubts that Lüders' (Beobachtungen über die Sprache des buddhistischen Urkanons, Berlin 1954, § 220) wholesale rejection of Hoernle's rendering "friendship with ..." is justified. My impression is rather that it was probably only in the course of its adaptation to Buddhist spirituality that the offer of friendship for safety in return, expressed in the first three verses of the text, was (in the last verse) supplemented by the spiritual practice of benevolence, and finally came to be superimposed or replaced by it (as in the prose, and in the Sankrit versions of the verses in so far as they have locatives instead of instrumentals).

[218] AN II 72f = Vin II 109f; cp. E. Waldschmidt, Von Ceylon bis Turfan, Göttingen 1967, 341ff. Cp. also Śikṣ 200,15.

[219] Cp. also Cromwell Crawford in: Radical Conservatism, 166.

[220] See § 39.2 + fns. 172 and 175.

already been one another's k i n .[221] Later texts occasionally express, in the context of motivating universal compassion and benevolence, the idea that all sentient beings are to be regarded as the self, or as equal to oneself,[222] and try to establish a metaphysical basis for this either in the doctrine of the non-existence of a self (i.e. a substantial Ego)[223] or in the presence of a common "self" or true essence of all sentient beings.[224]

45 To be sure, one may be sceptical with regard to the extent the archaic idea of a non-aggression pact or friendship treaty with animals[225] actually works, i.e. is communicable to the animals and kept by them, too.[226] Yet, what is important in our context is that the Sermon on benevolence towards snakes[227] suggests that the pact or treaty is, in analogy to a treaty with other tribes, made with various families or s p e c i e s of snakes[228] and with c l a s s e s of animals.[229] If this element were retained in the more developed idea of a community of all sentient beings, it would (provided that we ignore the belief in the particular unhappiness of animal existence) grant to species a certain right of their own, which could serve as the basis for their protection.

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221 SN II 189f; cp. also, e.g., VisM IX.36; ŚrBh 379,8ff; LAS 245,10ff (in the context of arguing for abstention from eating meat); T vol. 24, 1006b9ff (Mahāyānist *Brahmajālasūtra), adding the argument that all the elements [which are now the body of other living beings] have, in the past, constituted one's own body, so that killing those beings means killing oneself. — From a modern Western point of view, one might rephrase the argument in terms of biological evolution.

222 E.g. VisM IX.47; MSA XIV.37; BCA VI.126. Cp. Schmithausen 1985, 111; Tauscher 1989, 192.

223 BCA VIII.101-103; cp. VIII.91. Cp. Schmithausen 1985, 111f.

224 E.g. MSA XIV.30; Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya (ed. Nagao) 35,10f; RGV I.157 and 165-167. Cp. §§ 30.1ff, and Schmithausen 1985, 112.

225 Cp., in this connection, also the Buddha's taming of infuriated animals by means of benevolence (*mettā*; e.g. Vin II 195; cp. L.deSilva 1987, 18).

226 Cp. Śikṣ 200,15ff, taking into consideration the possibility that benevolence with dangerous wild animals may not always work, and exhorting the Bodhisattva to be, in case of failure, ready to sacrifice his body to the hungry animals (ib. 200,16ff).

227 See fn. 218.

228 *sace hi so ... bhikkhu cattāri ahirāja- k u l ā n i mettena cittena phareyya, na hi so ... ahinā daṭṭho kālaṃ kareyya.*

229 *apādakehi me mettaṃ, mettaṃ dipādakehi ca*, etc.; *mā maṃ apādako hiṃsi, mā maṃ hiṃsi dipādako*, etc.; *siriṃsapāni, ahi-vicchikā, satapadī, uṇṇanābhī, sarabhū, mūsikā.*

46 Although this runs counter to at least the bulk of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist tradition, it would, from an ecological point of view, be reasonable to include, into the community of sentient or at least living beings a Buddhist, even a lay person, should not kill, also the p l a n t s ,[230] at least as a "border-line case" (§ 10.3), as seems in fact to be suggested by at least one verse text which takes the first Precept to include, even in the case of lay followers, abstention from the killing of and violence against mobile a n d s t a t i o n a r y (animate) beings.[231] To be sure, in this case — provided that ordinary people are to be given a chance to take it seriously — the precept not to kill living beings can no longer be applied in a c a t e g o r i c a l form but only as an ideal that everybody must strive to fulfil to his very best. But this is likewise true in the case of animals, at any rate if micro-organisms, too, are taken into consideration.[232]

47 In the context of the Five Precepts, the idea of a community including not only men but also other living beings, especially animals, has evolved mainly in the case of the first Precept. Actually, killing animals is the grossest form of violating their interests, just as in the case of men. Besides, at least in urban and agricultural societies it can in fact be avoided to a considerable extent. The same would hold good for other kinds of injuring like hurting or torturing, which, though not explicitly prohibited by the wording of the standard form of the Precept (*pāṇātipātā paṭivirato hoti*), can hardly be taken to be, on that account, allowed.[233] In the case of the other

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[230] For a similar suggestion (forest/trees), see Kabilsingh 1990, 308. — In a sense, one may even include earth, water and air: not necessarily as living (let alone sentient) beings, but at any rate as b e i n g s . This would coincide with the position Prof. Kajiyama arrives at — in his response at the symposium — in his interpretation of the five *skandha* and the six *gati* theory, as well as with the position advocated by some contemporary Western thinkers (e.g., Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich, Aufstand für die Natur, München (Hanser) 1990, 56ff, esp. 78-82).

[231] Sn 394. See *Plants* §§ 26.3f.

[232] The problem could, from a Buddhist point of view, be settled either by making use of a very narrow concept of "intentional" (with all the problematic consequences entailed by such a position in the context of environmental ethics: see ch. I.A), or — in a way similar to how Indian Buddhism had solved the problem of plant *ahiṃsā* — by simply disregarding micro-organisms in everyday life on account of the impracticability involved, or even excluding them from the realm of animals by denying them sentience. Cp. also fn. 182.

[233] Actually, occasionally "killing" is replaced by "injuring" (*(vi)hiṃsā*, *(vi)heṭhana*, cp., e.g., AN III 213: *na h i ṃ s e pāṇabhūtāni*), or supplemented by it (MN I 42, where *avihiṃsaka* has been prefixed to the series *pāṇātipātā paṭivirato*, etc.). In commentarial literature, *hiṃsā*, etc., are taken to include, among other things, ***1.*** killing (e.g., Sn-a ad 117 *(jīvitā voropeti)* and 247 *(vadha)*), ***2.*** fettering or confining (*bandha*, Sn-a ad Sn 247), ***3.*** injuring by means of the hands, lumps of earth, sticks, weapons, etc. (ibid.; Ud-a 275), ***4.*** torturing (*pīḷana*, Th-a ad Th 757; cp. VisM I.92 stating that *vihiṃsā* has the sense of *ābādha*, "affliction, pain"), and even ***5.*** lack of compassion (Sn-a ad Sn

four Precepts, however, reference to animals (or other living beings except man) does not seem to play a significant role.

47.1 As for the idea that animals, too, own certain things which one should not take away from them, it is not often met with in the texts. At Vin III 58, dealing with monks who have eaten the remains of the quarry (*vighāsa*) of a beast of prey[234], appropriating what belongs to an animal (*tiracchānagatapariggaha*) is even stated to be n o offence.[235] But the Vinaya is not concerned, primarily, with morality proper but rather with the internal harmony and external reputation of the Order.[236] From a moral point of view, the matter may be judged differently. Actually, in Sri Laṅka it is not respectable to take honey for food (except for medical purposes)[237] because it is considered to be the property of the bees.[238] And in his commentary on the above-mentioned Vinaya passage Buddhaghosa[239] specifies that the statement concerns only what has been left over and abandoned by the beast of prey, and that one should not chase the animal away from its quarry while it is still eating — even though this too would not constitute an offence in the sense of the Vinaya —, because it is dangerous for oneself a n d out of c o m p a s s i o n . The first reason can be understood as a particularization of the a n t h r o p o c e n t r i c argument for protecting nature, whereas the second one would correspond to arguing for protection of other creatures for their o w n sake. Hence, from a moral point of view there is good reason to consider the destruction, over-exploitation and pollution of eco-systems to be a case of bereaving the animals living there of their habitat, i.e. of usurping their property. In fact, some Vinayas explain the prohibition to destroy plants by the argument that they are the abode of animals (which they would be deprived of if the

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292; cp. AN-a II 250; DN-a III 982). Cp. also (for Jainism) R. Williams, Jaina Yoga ([2]Delhi 1983), 64ff, and (for Hinduism) I. Proudfoot, Ahiṃsā and a Mahābhārata Story (Canberra 1987), 1. — Likewise, in the Pāṭimokkhasutta, too, only intentional k i l l i n g (*jīvitā voropeyya*) of men (Pār. 3) and animals (Pāc. 61) is prohibited, but the Vinayavibhaṅga supplies evidence that also causing p a i n to an animal (or man) is considered an offence, albeit a less serious one (Vin III 76; cp. MacDermott 1989, 272).

[234] Cp. A. Wezler, Die wahren "Speiseresteesser" (Mainz/Wiesbaden 1978), 39f.

[235] Vin III 58. Cp. McDermott 1989, 276.

[236] Cp. *Plants* § 5.5.

[237] Maithri Murthi 1986, 41.

[238] Oral communication from Mr. Maithri Murthi.

[239] Sp 379f. I am, however, not sure that Buddhaghosa is aware of the fact (which seems to form the background of the Vinaya passage itself) that the animal may return to its quarry later on, and that it is this possibility that he wants to exclude by specifying the quarry as "abandoned" (*chaḍḍita*).

plants are destroyed) (cp. § 11.2).[240]

47.2 Of course, even the precept prohibiting sexual misbehaviour can easily be applied to animals in so far as it may be taken to include the prohibition of sodomy, as is actually the case in the corresponding Pāṭimokkha rule.[241] But from the point of view of a community of all sentient beings it would, nowadays, be much more important to have the precept include a prohibition of excessive human propagation which is not compatible with peaceful coexistence with most of the other species and even threatens them with extinction. Needless to say, the institution of the Buddhist Order of monks and nuns, renouncing as they do propagation, receives additional ethical significance in this connection.

III. Specific Aspects of Mahāyāna Ethics in Connection with the Attitude towards Nature

48 H. Nakamura[242] writes that especially in the case of the Jains traditional values prevent the development of technology, the precept not to kill animals excluding, for them, e.g., the use of insecticides, animal experiments, or the draining of marshes. Nakamura then states that for the Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans, who profess Mahāyāna Buddhism, there are no such problems. But the question is why; for on the whole, the Mahāyāna, too, prohibits the killing of animals[243] just like Jainism or traditional Buddhism.

49 In the case of the use of insecticides or the draining of marshes (or, one may add, the destruction of forests and other ecosystems), the reasons why (some) Mahāyāna countries show little inhibition may be more or less the same as in the case of Theravāda countries: e.g.,
tendency, especially among peasants, to disregard the precept not to kill in the case of small animals;[244]

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[240] Cp., in connection with the problem of property rights of non-human living beings, also the prohibition to fell a tree without asking permission of the deity inhabiting it (see § 11.1; at Jā IV 350, a tree is stated to be in the possession of a Nāga (°*pariggahīta*)).

[241] Pār. 1; cp. Vin III 21f and 34 (female monkey).

[242] Nakamura 1980, 282.

[243] Cp. the explicit statements in the (Mahāyānist) *Brahmajālasūtra (T vol. 24, 1004b16ff; R.K. Heinemann, Der Weg des Übens im ostasiatischen Mahāyāna, Wiesbaden 1979, 121f), or the *Upāsakaśīlasūtra (T vol. 24, 1049a28ff). Cp. EncBuddh, I, 290f.

[244] Terwiel 1972, 340; Gombrich 1971, 262 (but cp. also Maithri Murthi 1986, 43ff). Buddhaghosa (Sp 864; DN-a I 69) states that from the point of view of the Vinaya there is no difference in offence whether a monk kills a small or a big animal, but that killing a big animal is morally (or karmically)

unawareness of, or tendency to minimize, the problems involved in indirect and unintended killing;[245]
adaptation to economic needs (as fishing in Japan);
a certain inborn anthropocentricity of man, reinforced by the "pro-civilization strand" of the Buddhist tradition (§§ 20ff);
only superficial influence of Buddhist ethics upon large strata of society in at least some countries;
and — last but not least — the intrusion of the modern Western attitude of unrestrained consumption and exploitation of nature.
But there may be other reasons as well, such as would seem to be typical of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

50 In early Buddhism, the precept not to kill living beings is a categoric one, with a tendency not to allow of any exception.

50.1 Take, e.g., the case of self-defence. According to Vasubandhu (4th or 5th cent. AD), killing in order to protect oneself is qualified as resulting from greed, hence not sanctioned.[246] Or a person conscripted into the army remains unstained by the collective act of killing committed in war only if he vows beforehand not to kill any living being, not even in order to save his own life.[247] For a monk, the prohibition of self-defence through injuring others holds good even with regard to trees or to the earth; for according to the Code of Monastic Precepts (Pātimokkhasutta) injuring plants or digging the earth is an offence to be atoned (*pācittiya*).[248] Buddhaghosa (5th cent. AD) states that a monk is prohibited from doing so even for the sake of saving his life, e.g. when a tree has fallen down upon him and jammed him, or when he has fallen into a pit.[249]

50.2 Even killing for the sake of protecting a friend is stated by Vasubandhu to be based on greed or desire and hence not admissible.[250]

50.3 Even compassion is not usually considered to justify an exception. To be sure, in the case of the monk jammed by a tree or fallen into a pit, Bud-

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worse because the effort (*payoga*) or aggressiveness (*upakkama*) involved is greater.

[245] Cp. §§ 13 and 37ff.

[246] AKBh 240,19f. Cp. already Vin I 237 = AN IV 188 (*na mayaṃ jīvitahetu pi sañcicca pāṇaṃ jīvitā voropeyyāma*).

[247] AKBh 243,8f.

[248] Pāc. 10 and 11 (cp. § 10.1).

[249] Sp 768f and 477.

[250] AKBh 240,19f.

dhaghosa, on the authority of older commentaries, feels bound to accept that a n o t h e r monk is allowed to rescue the victim even by cutting the tree or digging the earth, but he does n o t admit, as a reason for this, the fact, suggested by others, that in this case the motive is not self-love but compassion. Even such a good, unselfish intention is not sufficient to turn an offence into a non-offence.[251] Another example, in the Vinaya[252], is that exhorting an executioner not to torture the culprit but to kill him with one blow is stated to be an offence entailing expulsion from the Order (*pārājika*), although it seems that the monk's remark is motivated by his having compassion with the culprit. The mere fact that he uses the imperative "kill" seems sufficient to render the remark a *pārājika*, in spite of the real intention and of the fact that the culprit is going to be killed anyway.

50.4 It is not, then, astonishing that e u t h a n a s i a , too, is rejected. Sarvāstivāda sources[253] mention an Iranian habit to kill one's old or sick parents in order to save them decrepitude and suffering. This is classified as "killing due to misorientation (*moha*)". Likewise, in the Vinaya[254] the advice given to a sick person to commit suicide is stated to be a *pārājika* offence, even if the motive is compassion. According to oral information from M. Maithri Murthi, in Sri Lankan Buddhism euthanasia is not allowed even with regard to a n i m a l s .

51 In the Vinaya of the Mahīśāsakas, however, it seems to be p e r m i t t e d , unintentional killing and killing out of c o m p a s s i o n being declared to be n o offence;[255] reference is probably to a n i m a l s only, for they are mentioned shortly before. Another exception is noted by Gombrich[256] who reports that most Ceylonese monks sanction Duṭṭhagāmaṇi's war against the Tamils threatening Buddhism, i.e., they admit killing in order to save the B u d d h i s t r e l i g i o n .

52 But such occasional exceptions rather look like anticipations or reflections of the M a h ā y ā n a stance. For at least in some currents of Mahāyāna and in some Tantric texts, it is expressly stated that there are certain situations of conflict in

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[251] Sp 769.

[252] Vin III 86.

[253] AKBh 240,23f; Vi 605c16ff, esp. 20f. Cp. Sh. Kasugai in: IBK III.1/1954, 299ff; Shinjo Kawasaki, A Reference to Maga in the Tibetan Translation of the *Tarkajvālā*, in: IBK XXIII.2/1975, (18) [= 1099]; Lindtner 1988, 440 (Soghdians); Halbfass 1991, 108 (+ n. 98) and 110 (+ n. 110).

[254] Vin III 79; cp. T vol. 23, 10b21ff (Rosen 1959, 56). Cp. also Vin III 86 (offering a means for euthanasia to the relatives of a mutilated man is *pārājika*).

[255] T vol.22, 9a8-10.

[256] Gombrich 1971, 257f.

which compassion and/or protection of the Buddhist Doctrine or clergy do in fact prevail even over the precept not to kill, and put it out of force.

53.1 What, then, is the position of Mahāyāna Buddhism with regard to e u - t h a n a s i a for decrepit or incurably sick or injured persons or, in the context of nature, a n i m a l s , especially if they suffer great pains? Wouldn't one expect the Mahāyāna to recommend or at least allow to put an end to their suffering by k i l l i n g such a person or at least such an animal, if compassion has in fact priority over the precept not to kill? The view that existence as an animal is particularly u n h a p p y (see § 21.2) might even give rise to the g e n e r a l idea that killing them in order to liberate them from their miserable state would be an act of mercy[257] — an idea actually ascribed in Indian sources to the so-called Saṃsāramocakas.[258] From this point of view, one might even argue that the basic unhappiness of existence as an animal ultimately justifies even the present-day e x - t i r p a t i o n of whole species, or even the extirpation of animals altogether.

53.2 However, apart from the above-mentioned passage from the Vinaya of the Mahīśāsakas,[259] I for one have n o t , so far, noted, in classical texts, any passage sanctioning (not to mention recommending) the killing, out of compassion, of a man or animal suffering from acute and incurable pain, let alone the killing of animals (or certain kinds of animals) in general as a matter of principle, as ascribed to the Saṃsāramocakas. On the contrary, in one Mahāyāna text the position of the latter is expressly rejected, and clearly distinguished from the cases where killing out of compassion is justified, by pointing out that it is based on misorientation (*moha*), i.e., on ignorance of the law of karma.[260] Also in the writings of modern Mahāyāna Buddhists one can find express statements against active euthanasia.[261]

54.1 The situations of conflict in which the mediæval Mahāyāna sources do accord priority to compassion over the precept not to kill are of a somewhat different kind. One such situation is when (just as in the case of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi) the B u d -

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[257] For an analogous reasoning with regard to humans cp. Demiéville 1957, 349.

[258] On these, A. Wezler, Zur Proklamation religiös-weltanschaulicher Toleranz bei dem indischen Philosophen Jayantabhaṭṭa, in: Saeculum XXVII.4 (1976), 335f; Halbfass 1983, 10ff; 1991, 97ff.

[259] See fn. 255.

[260] *Sāgaramegha ad Bodhisattvabhūmi 113,18ff (Derge-Tanjur, sems-tsam, yi, 167b3ff). The same holds good, according to *Sāgaramegha, for the Vedic view that the sacrificial victim will go to heaven. Besides, killing in Vedic ritual is based on greed because the sacrificer performs the ritual primarily for the sake of his o w n attainment of heaven.

[261] E.g., in a dialogue between Daisaku Ikeda, the president of the Sōkagakkai, and Arnold Toynbee (Toynbee/Ikeda, Wähle das Leben, 1982, 185f). But there are also suggestions to the opposite (cp., e.g., Carl B. Becker in: The Pure Land 6/1989, 150ff, esp. 156ff).

d h i s t r e l i g i o n or its representatives — the Buddha or the Saṅgha or one's spiritual teacher — are t h r e a t e n e d or abused. In such cases, the aggressors or insultors may be killed.[262].

54.2 It would seem that defending the Doctrine is sufficient as a motive; but some sources expressly[263] state the killing to be also motivated by c o m p a s s i o n or sympathy with the m a l e f a c t o r .

54.3 According to one passage of the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra,[264] the persons who have insulted the Mahāyāna Doctrine will, to be sure, go to hell after having been killed by the righteous king (who is the Bodhisattva), but they have a chance to understand the r e a s o n w h y they have fallen into hell, and thereby they eventually acquire faith in the Mahāyāna and are reborn in a Buddha's paradise.

54.4 In Tibetan Buddhism, enemies of the Buddhist Doctrine, usually demons, but also, e.g., the anti-Buddhist king Glaṅ-dar-ma, are killed by means of a r i t u a l procedure, which at the same time is conducive to the l i b e r a t i o n of the victim and is hence (at least also) motivated by compassion.[265]

54.5 Yet, interesting though these (doubtless not undangerous) ideas are, they are hardly applicable to nature or natural beings like animals, unless one imputes to them especial hostility towards the Buddhist Doctrine or clergy. However, H. Tauscher[266] reports the view of a Tibetan Lama who declared that the use of a c a r is to be permitted — even in connection with the activities of a monastery — for the sake of propagating the D o c t r i n e , even though a n y car driving inevitably involves, at least in summer, the killing of — doubtless i n n o c u o u s — insects (and not too rarely, so one may add, of other animals as well as men, women and children).[267]

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[262] MPSMah 383b22ff (cp. Yamamoto 1973-5, vol. 1, 77ff); 434c18-20; cp. Demiéville 1957, 378; Snellgrove 1987, 175f.

[263] In others (e.g., SDPT 218,1ff and STTS 105,11f; cp. Snellgrove 1987, 175f), both motives occur side by side with no clear definition of their mutual relation.

[264] MPSMah 459c26ff = 702a28ff (Yamamoto 1973-5, vol. 2, 393).

[265] Cp. R.A. Stein, Le *liṅga* des danses masquées lamaïques et la théorie des âmes, in: Sino-Indian Studies 5/1957, 200ff, esp. 202ff and 219ff; D. Seyfort Ruegg, Deux problèmes d'exégèse et de pratique Tantriques, in: Tantrik and Taoist Studies in Honour of R.A. Stein, I (Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques 20/1981), 223; id., Problems in the Transmission of Vajrayāna Buddhism in the Western Himālaya about the Year 1000, in: Acta Indologica 6/1984, 378.

[266] Tauscher 1989, 194 (+ 197 n. 43). Cp. also § 56.3 + fn. 277.

[267] As against this, Vin I 191, though for a different reason, prohibits monks from going by vehicle, (*yāna*), except in case of illness. In accordance with this, monks in Sri Lanka first refrained from using train, bus or car at all, and even now abstain from driving a car themselves (oral information

55.1 But there are other situations, as, e.g., when a bandit, a dacoit, is about to kill a group of persons who have not done him any harm. In this case, a Bodhisattva may k i l l the bandit, out of c o m p a s s i o n. Though some texts are not specific and simply state that the Bodhisattva, or Tantric, kills mischievous or malevolent beings out of compassion,[268] those texts which are more precise specify that the motive of the Bodhisattva is n o t compassion with the v i c t i m but (as in the case of enemies of the Doctrine) compassion with the m a l e f a c t o r : He is killed in order to save him from the e v i l a c t i o n of killing he is about to commit and from the rebirth in hell it would entail.[269]

55.2 From such cases, one might derive the right to k i l l n o x i o u s a n i m a l s like beasts of prey, or to use insecticides against "vermin" destroying people's crops. But if one were to keep to the specific features of the above examples, it would follow that the animals concerned are m a l e v o l e n t and that, by attacking people, or by killing one another, or by damaging people's crops, they accumulate bad karma. Such a highly problematic view, viz. that animals are malevolent, is in fact documented already in pre-Mahāyāna Buddhist texts (see § 21.2). Still, killing noxious or troublesome animals is expressly discarded as an un-Buddhist habit not only in traditional (i.e., Śrāvakayāna)[270] but also in Mahāyāna sources. E.g., the Mahāyānist Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra[271] criticizes as heterodox[272] the idea that killing any amount of noxious or troublesome animals like ants,

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from M. Maithri Murthi).

[268] SDPT 218,3f; cp. also STTS 105,11f;

[269] BoBh 113,18ff; Mahāyānasaṃgraha (ed. Lamotte) VI.5.1 and comm.; Śikṣ 168,1; cp. also the more complicated situation in T No. 156 (vol. 3, 161b15ff, esp. 29ff.); Demiéville 1957, 379f; cp. also D. Seyfort Ruegg, Deux problèmes ... [see fn. 265], 223 n. 67. — Contrast with this the statement (not entirely parallel, it is true) of the Vinaya of the Sarvāstivādins (T vol. 23, 10b2ff; Rosen 1959, 56) that it is a *pārājika* offence when a monk persuades hunters, fishermen or other professional evil-doers to commit suicide in order to prevent them from further wrongdoing.

[270] See fn. 204. — In Jainism, too, it is considered wrong to kill "destructive" creatures even with the intention that thereby other creatures will be saved from death or injury: R. Williams, Jaina Yoga, repr. Delhi 1983, 65.

[271] MPSMah 460a26ff (Yamamoto 1973-5, vol. 2, 394).

[272] The idea is, strangely enough, ascribed to B r a h m a n i c a l *dharma*. The mention, in the first place, of a n t s would rather point to the I r a n i a n M a g a s (cp. Bhāvaviveka, Madhyamakahṛdyakārikā IX.31 + Tarkajvālā: see Kawasaki, op. cit. [see fn. 253], (15) and (17) [= 1102 and 1100]; cp. also Halbfass 1983, 13f; 1991, 107ff; Lindtner 1988, 438f and 441); but there may be some interference of the usual attitude of people whose thought and feeling is not significantly influenced by specific religious or other considerations and inhibitions. And the similar view described by Vasubandhu (see § 42 + fns. 203 and 204) hardly differs from this common attitude at all.

mosquitos, fleas, lice or beasts of prey is no offence.

56.1 However, one may argue that the afore-mentioned Mahāyāna and Tantric sources which put the precept not to kill out of force in certain situations are n o t concerned with situations where there is conflict between an evildoer and one's o w n interests, and hence a possibility to abstain from killing by sacrificing o n e s e l f . Rather, what they are concerned with are more complicated cases: cases where one is not personally involved but where only o t h e r people's interests are concerned, and where there is merely a choice between killing, or letting be killed or injured, the o n e side o r the o t h e r . In these cases, the texts take the part of the innocuous side and allow to kill the evil one.

56.2 One could derive from this the principle that in case of v i t a l conflicts it is justified to use force against, or even kill, the m o r a l l y or s p i r i t u a l l y i n f e r i o r side. Such a view would seem to be confirmed by the case described in the Bodhisattvabhūmi where it is stated that the motive of the aggressor is base (namely material gain)[273] and that among the persons in danger there may be noble Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas and Bodhisattvas.[274] Now, the Mahāyānist Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra expressly states that, since men are spiritually on a higher level than animals, killing an a n i m a l , though, to be sure, an offence, is still l e s s s i n f u l than killing a h u m a n .[275] From this one might deduce — provided that no distinction is made between killing and letting be killed or letting die — that in case of conflict of interests it is justified to k i l l a n i m a l s if otherwise h u m a n s would have to d i e (e.g. by starvation or disease).

56.3 From this point of view, then, one could justify killing noxious animals like "vermins" or beasts of prey,[276] or driving a car in order to save human life,[277] but also draining marshes, clearing forests or even animal experiments (for serious medicinal purposes only, of course), and it may well be that this is one of the reasons why, as Nakamura states,[278] Mahāyāna Buddhist countries seem to have no problems with regard to such activities.

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[273] BoBh 113,20.

[274] BoBh 113,19f.

[275] MPSMah 460b5ff (Yamamoto 1973-5, vol. 2, 394f) ; cp. also Mochizuki, Bukkyō Daijiten, 2932f; Ling 1969, 58.

[276] Cp. Atisha 1991, 9 (official prohibitions to kill animals e x c e p t tigers, etc., during part of the year or on special occasions).

[277] bsTan 'dzin gźan phan acc. to Tauscher 1989, 194 + 197 n. 43 (cp. § 54.5).

[278] See fn. 242.

57 But all this rests on the ultimately anthropocentric presupposition that m a n is spiritually (or otherwise) superior to and hence at any rate m o r e v a l u a b l e t h a n a n i m a l s ,[279] let alone plants. Yet, from a "cosmocentric" point of view — one for which the global ecosystem as an intact whole, with a l l its species and landscapes, is the highest value[280] —, or from an "acentric" one,[281] such an evaluation of the clever but excessively troublemaking species man is highly problematic. Even the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra,[282] though in the specific context of relieving King Ajātaśatru of his qualms for having killed his father, questions the intuitive distinction between killing a man and killing an animal by pointing out that both of them equally love life and fear death. And according to the same Sūtra *icchantikas*, i.e. people utterly adverse to the Buddhist, especially Mahāyāna Doctrine,[283] are spiritually i n f e r i o r even to a n i m a l s , and therefore killing an *icchantika* is less grave than killing an animal, nay, even n o bad karma at all, just like digging the earth, mowing grass, felling a tree or cutting a corpse to pieces.[284] Doubtless a dangerous doctrine; but nowadays it may not be easy to resist the temptation to envisage people who ruthlessly and stubbornly continue destroying the environment as a kind of "environmental *icchantikas*".

58 In some of the above-mentioned sources,[285] o n e person is killed in order to save a l a r g e n u m b e r of people. Though in these sources themselves this q u a n t i t a t i v e aspect is not expressly used to justify the killing, it has been thus understood in the Far East (一殺多生: "one being killed, many stay

[279] See §§ 21-21.2. Cp. Bhikkhu Rewata Dhamma in: Radical Conservatism, 160 ("Among living beings human life is the most precious ..."). — Cp. also the fact that a gift to an animal is less meritorious that one to a man (AN I 161; MN III 255; AKBh 270,5f + 11).

[280] Strictly speaking, further qualifications are required to make allowance for the fact — which is, by the way, essentially in accordance with the Buddhist emphasis on universal change and impermanence — that the global eco-system is, by nature, n o t i n v a r i a b l e , and that there is also a n a t u r a l process of emerging and disappearing not only of individuals but also of species.

[281] Cp., for this term, Stephen Batchelor in: Dharma Gaia, 180. He continues: "Paradoxically, however, placing nothing at the center is tantamount to placing *everything* at the center."

[282] MPSMah 484b5f = 727b23f (Yamamoto 1973-5, vol. 2, 491).

[283] Thus RGVV 37,2; cp. MPSMah 460b19f. For the history of the term see M. Shimoda in: Bukkyōgaku 27/1989, 69ff.

[284] MPSMah 460b15ff (Yamamoto 1973-5, vol. 2, 395). Cp. Ming-Wood Liu, The Problem of the *Icchantika* in the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra, in: JIABS 7.1/1984, 68.

[285] Viz. Bodhisattvabhūmi and T No. 156 (see fn. 269).

alive").[286] This principle would lend itself to justifying (medically essential) animal tests — yet why ever not also tests on humans? It would, however, surely n o t lend itself to justifying environmental destruction and pollution, where the animals killed by far outnumber the human lives saved — let alone the fact that the motive is often not saving people's lives but rather money or luxury, and the fact that many forms of environmental destruction and pollution, as, e.g., the destruction of most tropical rain forests, yield only short-time relief and will in the end certainly cost even more human lives than those which, if any, were saved by them in the beginning.

59 Another idea worth mentioning in this connection is the T a n t r i c view, prefigured in the Madhyamaka tradition[287] and shared by some schools of Far Eastern Buddhism like Tendai,[288] that from the highest standpoint there is no distinction between good and bad, between keeping the precepts and breaking them,[289] and that the perfect saint is not stained[290] even by killing people[291] or animals[292]. Such a view, if secularized,[293] is doubtless likely to reduce inhibitions with regard to killing, especially killing animals.

60 But there are other aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism which may have had much more influence on the attitude of the masses towards nature than such primarily theoretical or esoteric ideas. Perhaps the most important one is the belief that by certain devices b a d k a r m a can be a n n u l l e d (cp. § 14.3). Such devices are, to be sure, suitable for r e l i e v i n g the mind of persons who, like peasants or fishermen, have no chance to avoid killing animals. But at the same time they may lead to a w e a k e n i n g of i n h i b i t i o n s to the extent of rendering the very precept not to kill animals virtually ineffectual. This is especially true of easily available appeasement or atonement ceremonies which are applied specifically and immediately after or even before[294] a particular act of killing or injuring (cp. §

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286 Cp. Demiéville 1957, 379; Mochizuki, Bukkyōdaijiten, 2933.

287 Cp., e.g., MPPU 163b10ff; c1ff; 164a19ff ($MPPU_L$ II, 860f; 864).

288 Cp. § 31.1. Cp. also Demiéville 1957, 382f.

289 E.g., CMT p. 32, verses 7.18ff; Snellgrove 1987, 174-176.

290 E.g., SDPT p. 218,13f (*sarvakṛt sarvabhug vā kiṃ* [read °*k cāpi*?] *vajrasattvapade sthitaḥ // sidhyate, naiva duṣyeta ...*); cp. Snellgrove 1987, 175f.

291 CMT p. 32, verses 7.24 and 7.36; cp. Snellgrove, op. cit., 174.

292 CMT p. 32, verse 7.38. Cp. also T vol. 74, 381b3f.

293 Cp. Śikṣ 171,13ff.

294 Cp. the ground clearing ceremony mentioned in *H* (see § 61 + fn. 297) 389 b18.

14.5). It would seem to hold good also in the case of Shin and particularly Jōdo-shin Buddhism, where salvation or a fortunate destiny after death (viz. rebirth in the Pure Land) is, basically, no longer dependent upon one's own karma but rather upon the "other-power" of Amida. To be sure, free indulgence in sinful acts (*zōaku-muge* 造悪無礙) was expressly rejected by Shinran as a misinterpretation of his doctrine.[295] But on the other hand the belief that bad actions, being anyway more or less inevitable,[296] are no obstacle to Amida's salvific activity clearly mitigates the inexorability of the karmic law and hence cannot but be in danger of rendering transgressions of the precepts — including the one not to kill animals — ultimately less serious, especially if they are not committed in a wicked mood but for the sake of one's own or one's family's physical survival or by mere thoughtlessness.

IV. Remarks on N. Hakamaya's View of the Problem of "Buddhism and Nature"

61 After the Symposium, my view on the Buddhist attitude towards nature (as expressed in my paper of 1985) has been challenged by Noriaki Hakamaya in his article *Shizen hihan to shite no Bukkyō* ("Buddhism as a Criticism of *Physis/-Natura*").[297] In a supplementory note (*H* 403 b16ff) he states that even after a personal discussion with me, which took place in a most friendly atmosphere indeed in Tokyo on Oct. 6, 1990,[298] he was unable to detect any point of agreement between our approaches. From my point of view, too, our approaches are altogether different, and the result is incompatible in some fundamentals regards, although I should not say: in every regard. For whereas Hakamaya, criticizing the view that Buddhism protects (擁護) "nature"[299] and stating that on the contrary Buddhism does not accept (容認)[300] but negates (否定)[301] "nature", seems to advocate, uncompromisingly and with emotional commitment,[302] a n e g a t i v e attitude of

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[295] M. Pye in: The Pure Land 6/1989, 168.

[296] Tannishō XIII (Ryūkoku Transl. Series, II, p. 49).

[297] In: Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyōgaku-bu Ronshū 21/1990, 380-403. — In the present chapter, this article is referred to by *H* followed by page number(s) specified, if necessary, by indication of half page (a = above, b = below) and line.

[298] At that time, I had not yet read his article since it was still unpublished.

[299] *H* 381 a1f; 384 a5-7; 396 a12.

[300] E.g., *H* 380 b4f; 381 a9; 383 b25f; 395 b3, b11.

[301] *H* 385 b22; 386 b13f.

[302] Cp. especially *H* 380 b12ff. I cannot approve of Hakamaya's somewhat derogatory way of imputing

Buddhism towards nature, my view, clear from my papers, is that the attitude of Buddhism towards nature is complex or multi-faceted and hence, in a sense, a m b i v a l e n t . I do not deny the negative aspects, but I stress that they are, to a certain extent at least, counterbalanced by positive aspects. My impression is that to a considerable extent our disagreement is due to the fact that we start from entirely different conceptual presuppositions and objectives, which I shall try to lay bare in order to explain w h y we arrive at different conclusions. But I shall also try to make it clear why I, for my part, cannot always follow Hakamaya even if I were to accept his presuppositions.[303]

62.1 The first point to be discussed in this connection is the term ' n a - t u r e ' . For me, it is not the term 'nature' that has determined the scope of my investigation. Rather I have chosen this term with an already determined scope of investigation in my mind, hoping that with the necessary delimitations it would do. In doing so, my starting point is the prevalent modern use of the word 'nature', or at least one important aspect of it, viz. nature in the sense of natural beings, landscapes and eco-systems.[304] I should consider it unfair to be blamed with not having treated problems connected with other (albeit traditionally dominant) meanings of the term 'nature' — problems which I am neither able nor willing to treat, as I have made clear by expressly defining in which sense I use the word 'nature' in the title of my symposium paper as well as of my paper published in 1985.[305]

62.2 In contradistiction to this, Hakamaya's concept of nature expressly bases itself on other meanings of the Greek term '*physis*' and the Latin term '*natura*', such as have been more central in traditional Western philosophy. Provided that I have understood him correctly, he takes nature, primarily, in the sense of the c r e a - t i v e o r i g i n of beings (*H* 386 b3), as the Sanskrit equivalent of which he adduces '*prakṛti*'; but, so it seems, also in the sense of their essence or true essence, which is also a meaning of '*prakṛti*'. At any rate, it would seem that it is only on the basis of a combination of these two meanings that he can construe a close connection between the non-acceptance or negation of "nature" and the denial of a substantial self

to "intellectuals" as well as Buddhologists and Buddhists to merely follow a fashion, without being existentially concerned. But he is right in pointing out that many Buddhists tend to take a somewhat rose-coloured view of the traditional Buddhist attitude towards nature.

[303] I admit that I should probably have read, for this purpose, Hakamaya's books *Hihan Bukkyō* ("Critical Buddhism": 1990) and *Hongaku-shisō hihan* (1989), but pressure of time and my poor Japanese have, unfortunately, so far prevented me from doing so. For the time being, I can do nothing but apologize for resuming the discussion in such a preliminary form.

[304] This use of the terms '*physis*' and '*natura*' is not exclusively modern but already found in Greek philosophy (Hist.Wb.Phil., vol. 6, 421; 431).

[305] § 1.1; Schmithausen 1985, 100. Cp. also Klas Sandell in: Sandell 1987, 5.

(*ātman*) of man (or living beings).[306] Though such a connection, albeit suggested by the ambiguity of the term 'nature', is hardly a matter of course,[307] one may readily concede Hakamaya that, on the whole,[308] early Buddhism does not posit or accept "nature" in the sense of a hypostatized creative origin of beings (a problem earliest Buddhism was hardly interested in at all) nor in the sense of a hypostatized true essence of man or other living beings. On the other hand, some currents of Mahāyāna Buddhism do accept "nature" in the sense of a permanent true essence of all beings (*tathatā, dharmatā, dharmadhātu*)[309] which is occasionally even called their "self" (*ātman*),[310] but at least in Indian Mahāyāna this "true nature" of beings is not usually understood as their creative origin,[311] though in a sense even this seems to be the case in some later developments and especially in some currents of Far Eastern Buddhism.[312] The main problem is, however, that Hakamaya seems to extend his judgement that Buddhism negates "nature" to the Buddhist attitude towards "nature" in the sense of natural things and beings themselves. In their case, too, the judgement is all right if it means that they are not accepted to exist without conditions (*H* 380 a15f). It would also make good sense if not accepting them is taken to mean denying them v a l u e on the ultimate level.[313] It would even make sense in the context of an intramundane evaluation of nature versus civilization, provided that it is restricted to one strand of the Buddhist tradition in contradistinction to another one.[314] But it cannot, in my opinion, be extended to the practical attitude towards natural beings, more precisely living beings, by being taken to imply that existing natural living beings are disclaimed the right to live and even treated accordingly. This would be

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[306] *H* 380 b4 (仏教が«自然»を容認せず«我説»を否定する思想である), etc.

[307] Cp. the fact that, as far as I can see, the self (*ātman*) is, in Indian philosophy, hardly ever designated by the term *'prakṛti'*. Yet, in so far as the self is the substantial essence of man (or living beings) and *prakṛti* the substantial essence and origin of the universe, they have substantiality as their common denominator and hence both of them became the target of Buddhist antisubstantialism.

[308] Some qualifications may be required (cp. *H* 398 a17-b15), but discussing them would exceed the limits of this paper.

[309] Cp. *H* 385 a25ff and b 9-12.

[310] E.g., RGV I.35; MSA IX.23.

[311] As far as I can see, the *dharmadhātu* is only, in a sense, the source of supramundane factors or *buddha-dharmas*.

[312] Cp. *H* 387 b, quoting from Chinese Ch'an sources (though I have to admit that I have some difficulties to follow his exegesis of the passages).

[313] See § 18.3.

[314] See §§ 19ff.

incompatible with the emphasis on *ahiṃsā*, especially in Early Buddhism. Nor is compassion (*karuṇā*), let alone benevolence (*mettā*, *maitrī*), understood as sanctioning the killing or extirpation of animals on the assumption that the existence of natural beings is miserable.[315]

63 But Hakamaya would probably argue that the strands which in some sense or other do accept "nature" in the sense of an original, true nature of man or natural beings, let alone in the sense of a creative origin, are not Buddhist at all (*H* 385 b7-9). This leads us to the second disagreement, viz. our different use of the concept "B u d d h i s m".

63.1 In so far as my own investigation has, on the one hand, the aim to contribute to the explanation of the situation of nature or environment in Buddhist countries (which is, nowadays at least, in most cases anything but satisfactory), I have good reason to regard as "Buddhism" the w h o l e of the Buddhist tradition, i.e. all movements and groups claiming to be Buddhist, and all ideas and attitudes occurring or documented to have occurred among them. What matters is that they have been, still are or might become influential in the context of attitudes and behaviour towards nature (in my sense of the word).[316] But I take "Buddhism" as the whole of its tradition equally because my aim is, on the other hand, to make contemporary Buddhists aware of the multifacetedness and ambivalence of their tradition in order to have them lay stress, consciously, on those strands which favour a positive attitude towards nature consonant with present day requirements. Therefore, while indeed trying to assign all features to their historical position, I have not discarded later developments as inauthentic nor, on the whole,[317] distinguished between elements that are "genuinely Buddhist" and others that are not.

63.2 As against this, Hakamaya's conception of "Buddhism" is extremely restrictive. For him, it seems, "Buddhism" means "g e n u i n e Buddhism" only, and this excludes not only Far Eastern forms of Buddhism, like Zen,[318] which may have absorbed Taoist ideas, but also Indian Mahāyāna movements like that of

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[315] See fn. 106 and §§ 53.1f.

[316] I admit that my papers are largely confined to pointing out elements of Buddhist thought and practice which m a y have conditioned certain attitudes towards nature, and leave the task to prove that they have actually done so to others. But this is not the point at stake.

[317] I.e., apart from, e.g., certain misapplications of Buddhist principles in the everyday practice of Buddhist peasants (cp. § 13). But I admit that from my starting-point it may be rather difficult to draw a sharp border-line beyond which views or attitudes can be called "not genuinely Buddhist". In a sense, even such misapplications are, after all, characteristic of certain forms and strata of B u d d h i s m (in the sense of the whole of its tradition).

[318] Cp. *H* 386 b21 and 394 a19f, and especiallly the explicit statement in N. Hakamaya, Zenshū hihan, in: Komazawa Daigaku Zen-kenkyū-jo Nempō 1/1990, 68 (below, l. 4f).

tathāgatagarbha or the Yogācāra/Vijñānavāda school,[319] and even much of what we find in the canonical writings of Early Buddhism. It would seem that for Hakamaya genuine Buddhism is only original Buddhism, in other words: the authentic teachings of the Buddha himself; later doctrines would be "Buddhism" only if they are in complete agreement, or at least fully compatible, with it. However, apart from the fact that the criteria of compatibility may pose problems, not only the Buddhist tradition but also modern scholars disagree widely as to what can actually be regarded as the authentic teachings of the Buddha himself, opinions ranging from accepting, in substance, everything as authentic that is found in the four Nikāyas/Āgamas (and the old verse texts) to holding that we know next to nothing and that the canonical scriptures are mostly later concoctions.

63.3 Hakamaya's own position in this matter is very decided. Rejecting, as Hajime Nakamura's approach, the method to regard as old especially such elements as agree with Jainism (*H* 396), he rather follows H. Ui according to whom such elements have, on the contrary, to be excluded as inauthentic, the genuine elements being those which are peculiar to Buddhism (*H* 397, esp. a19ff). For Hakamaya, joining Shirō Matsumoto[320] (*H* 396f), the core of (authentic) Buddhism is, apart from the doctrine of origination in dependence (縁起, *pratītyasamutpāda*), the *denial of a self* (無我説, *anātmavāda*) (*H* 397 b5), which according to Hakamaya is opposed to the acceptance of "nature" (自然) (e.g., *H* 395 b3).

63.4 However, taken in an exclusive way, Ui's methodological presupposition is as arbitrary as Nakamura's would be. How on earth can we be sure that Buddhism started *only* with doctrines and practices *peculiar* to it? Is it not more probable that the Buddha, while, to be sure, proclaiming a new, peculiar message of his own as the centre of his teaching, at the same time also retained, adopted or adapted ideas and practices of his time, either as a matter of course or because he found them useful and compatible with his central teaching(s)? And can we really exclude the possibility that even some specifically Buddhist ideas were set forth only later on? But perhaps Hakamaya would not deny this. He would rather emphasize that all such ideas and practices as are *incompatible* with what he regards as the central message cannot but be later intrusions. And if I understand Hakamaya aright, what leads him to deny Buddhism a positive attitude towards nature, in whatever sense of the word, is his conviction that such an attitude is incompatible with this central message, viz. the denial of a self.

63.5 Yet, to my mind his position that the denial of a self is the central message of original Buddhism cannot be taken for granted. To be sure, the canonical texts of Early Buddhism frequently teach, with the spiritual aim of evoking detachment,[321]

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[319] With regard to the latter, cp. N. Hakamaya, Basho (*topos*) to shite no shinnyo ..., in: Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyōgaku-bu Kenkyū Kiyō 48/1990, (1)ff, esp. the conclusion on p. (49).

[320] Sh. Matsumoto, Engi to kū: Nyoraizō shisō hihan, 1989.

[321] Cp. the concluding formula at Vin I 14, etc. (*rūpasmiṃpi nibbindati, ... virajja-*

that the observable constituents of a person — the *skandhas* — a r e n o t the (or a) self (*attā*, *ātman*). But Hakamaya himself, quoting Matsumoto, admits that there is hardly any explicit statement in the Nikāyas declaring that a self does not exist (*H* 396f)[322] and that in vindicating this position, which is current in later texts, for the early canonical period, he has to resort to i n f e r e n c e deriving it from the doctrine of origination in dependence (*pratītyasamutpāda*). Quite apart from the fact that this inference is open to dispute and that even the doctrine of origination in dependence, at least in its composite "classical" form as a twelve-membered chain, is hardly the starting-point of the Buddha's teaching,[323] I for one strongly hesitate to accept, as the core of the original message of the Buddha, a doctrine which is nowhere (or next to nowhere) explicitly stated in the vast corpus of early canonical Buddhist literature and to reject, on this basis, much of what is unanimously and amply documented in the early sources, including even salvation as the highest goal of early Buddhism,[324] meditation (*dhyāna*, *samādhi*) as a central element of its spirituality,[325] and perhaps even non-injury (*ahiṃsā*),[326] provided that Hakamaya's wholesale rejection of any positive element in the Buddhist attitude towards nature is in fact meant to deny even the f a c t u a l protection of natural beings (at any rate of animals) entailed by the prohibition to kill or injure them.[327] From my point of view, denying the authenticity of these ubiquitous elements of canonical Buddhism in favour of a theoretical doctrine ascribed to it on the basis of mere inference (to the extent of even denying the soteriological core) is utterly arbitrary.[328]

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t i , ... v i m u c c a t i).

[322] Cp. also Claus Oetke, "Ich" und das Ich, Stuttgart 1988, 82ff.

[323] E. Frauwallner, Geschichte der indischen Philosophie, I, Salzburg 1953, 197ff, esp. 210ff; Vetter 1988, 45ff.

[324] Cp. Hakamaya's (*H* 394f) discussion of *nirvāṇa* (once again referring to Sh. Matsumoto); the perhaps older concept of *amṛta* (see Vetter 1988, xxviii f; 8f; 15) would hardly find more favour.

[325] *H* 393f; cp. 401 n. 38.

[326] *Ahiṃsā* is, to be sure, not the core message of the early Buddhist teaching, but nevertheless an indispensable element in it, inherited (and no doubt consciously retained) by Buddhism from its ascetic (i.e. śramaṇic) background (which is evident, e.g., from the ubiquitous expression '*samaṇo Gotamo*').

[327] I am not sure whether his remark at *H* 397 b17ff is meant to imply an incompatibility, with the *anātman* doctrine, of a n i m a l a n d plant (動植物) *ahiṃsā* itself or merely of its being based on the idea that plants (and animals ?!) are living beings or inhabited by deities.

[328] To my mind, T. Vetter's (1988) empathic reconstruction of the development of the earliest phase of Buddhist ideas and practices has, in spite of the criticism it has been the target of, a good chance to be, on the whole, on the right track.

63.6 But even if it were conceded that Hakamaya is right in starting from the denial of a self (or at least, to put it in historically safer words, from the fact that a substantial, hypostatized self is not advocated or presupposed) as the central element of "genuine Buddhism", i.e., the teaching of the historical Buddha, it still remains to be seen whether his assertion that a positive attitude towards nature is i n c o m - p a t i b l e with this doctrine proves tenable in all and every regard. This is not the right place for a detailed discussion of the difficult problem of consistency and compatibility. I confine myself to stating that I consider it extremely improbable that the Buddha, like a modern Western philosopher à la Descartes, systematically tried to derive every bit of his teaching from a single axiom. I do not at all find it unlikely that he combined in his teaching, in a peculiar way, several more or less heterogeneous strands[329] which do not logically follow from each other but are not incompatible either, complementing each other in the pursuit of the spiritual goal.

64 Apart from this, in an important case Hakamaya's derivation of a negative attitude towards nature from the denial of a self appears to be based on a confusion of concepts which at least in the Indian context are distinct. I am thinking of his criticism of the early Buddhist belief in t r e e d e i t i e s (*H* 397 b9ff), or "animism" (*H* 389f; 397 b15f) — which he seems to take to indicate affirmation (肯定) of nature (*H* 397 b11f) in his sense of the expression (§ 62.2) —, as contradicting the Buddhist denial of a self.

64.1 To be sure, in popular belief there is not always a sharp distinction between a tree soul and a tree deity, and the latter may occasionally show traces of the former even in Buddhist narrative literature.[330] And in Chinese translations 神 (Jap. *kami*) may render "self" or "soul" (*ātman*) as well as "deity" (*devatā*).[331] But in Indian Buddhist thought (in the Sermons as well as in Discipline texts) the two categories are, usually, neatly distinguished. The tree deities are n o t tree souls but independent living beings who merely i n h a b i t a tree, just as men inhabit a house or animals a hole, and they may shift to another one in case of emergency.[332] Accepting or not accepting their existence has nothing to do with accepting or not accepting a self (*ātman*) or substantial soul, no more than accepting or not accepting other gods (like Indra or Brahman) or other living beings (like animals or men). There is hence no reason to regard the belief in tree deities, ubiquitous in early as well as in later Buddhist sources, as inauthentic. To be sure, at least for the spirituality of the monks it was rather a marginal element, but as far as I can see it was never challenged.[333]

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[329] Cp. fn. 106.

[330] See fn. 40. Cp., perhaps, also Petavatthu II.9.1-6.

[331] Cp. H. Nakamura, Bukkyō-go daijiten (Tokyo 1975), vol. 1, 793.

[332] Vin IV 34. Cp. also § 11.1 + fn. 41.

[333] I have not yet seen the paper Hakamaya refers to in n. 51 of his article under discussion,

64.2 Nor do I understand why not accepting a self or soul would have forced the Buddha (or earliest Buddhism) to discard "animism" in the sense that even plants (etc.) themselves are living, sentient beings. To be sure, later on Buddhism has come to deny plants sentience, but in the beginning, it seems, there was no such denial, but, at best, a certain tendency towards it.[334] At any rate, the reason for it can hardly have been not accepting a self or soul,[335] for if lacking a self or soul implies being insentient in the case of plants, it would follow that animals and even men are insentient as well, since a self or soul is not accepted in them either. If animals and men can be sentient even without a self, merely by possessing mind, sensations etc., why not also plants?[336] Thus, I for one fail to perceive any reason why not accepting a self should have had any effect on the question of plants being sentient beings or being inhabited by deities. Hence, there is no reason why "genuine" Buddhism must necessarily have adopted, or adopt, a negative attitude towards nature in this specific sense.

64.3 Nor do I subscribe to Hakamaya's suggestion — set forth in support of G. Liedke's[337] reserves against the view that the Judæo-Christian rejection of deities in nature is the sole cause of the modern man-made ecological disaster — that one may even consider the possibility that "animism", far from protecting nature, may rather

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announcing evidence for a rejection of tree deities in Buddhist sources. But at least his critical remark on my interpretation of Vin IV 34 — in which he asserts that the text qualifies people believing in the existence of a soul (*jīva*) in trees as fools (*mogha-purisa*), and where he denies that injuring plants is prohibited because it involves injuring tree deities — is untenable (as was kindly pointed out to me by Fumio Enomoto even before I had read Hakamaya's article myself). As I have tried to show in detail in *Plants* §§ 5.3-4, the text has combined two different motivations for the prohibition to destroy or damage plants (and seeds). One is, it is true, the fact that people consider trees themselves to be living beings (*jīva*, not "soul" in this context, nor in the one discussed by Ui at *H* 382 a4ff!) possessing one sense-faculty. To be sure, the monks probably do not share this belief of people (cp. *Plants* § 5.5), but nevertheless it is not these people who are addressed as fools (*moghapurisā*, voc. pl.) but the monks who had cut the tree. Besides, the text unambiguously also introduces the existence of tree deities as another motive for the prohibition (see *Plants* § 5.3), and in this case not the slightest doubt in their existence is indicated, a tree deity being described as personally appealing to the Buddha.

334 See *Plants* ch. V.

335 What not accepting a self or soul m a y imply is the rejection of the specific idea, often connected with animism, that the soul of the creature killed takes revenge upon the killer. But to reject this idea does not imply denial of sentience in plants, no more than in the case of animals.

336 I.e., if Buddhists consider plants to be insentient, this has nothing to do with the *anātman* doctrine but is due to the fact that they are regarded to lack mind.

337 Gerhard Liedke, Im Bauch des Fisches (Stuttgart [5]1988), 40.

contribute to its destruction, as seen in the case of the Japanese who, though "animists", do not hesitate to destroy both their own and the tropical forests if only a "ground clearing ceremony" is performed beforehand (*H* 389 b 7 ff, esp. b16ff). It is hardly "animism" that can be made responsible for the destruction. On the contrary, "animism" as such, be it the belief in plants, etc., as living beings or in souls or spirits inhabiting them (and in the idea that these may take revenge upon any person killing or injuring the plant) is, by its very nature, an inhibitive factor. The problem is that it is, in a sense, too inhibitive, and that the inhibition it provides must be partially overcome in order to enable one's very subsistence. This is usually brought about by placative rites, which hence by their very nature reduce or annul inhibitions and favour utilization or even exploitation.[338] To what extent the system of "animism" plus placative rites as a whole protects nature or tolerates exploitation is a matter of the balance or imbalance between its two elements. In modern Japan, the balance is doubtless heavily weighted in favour of the exploitation side, belief in "animism" seemingly having weakened — probably not least under Western influence — to the extent of becoming obsolete and ineffectual,[339] and even the placative rites having, probably, come to be reduced, more or less, to a mere matter of custom.

65.1 Even though Hakamaya's view of the attitude of Buddhism towards nature would seem to be open to criticism from the point of view of the historian of ideas in so far as it presents itself as the position of "genuine" Buddhism, if this is taken to mean the unalloyed original teaching of the historical Buddha, he is, after all, not only a Buddhologist but also a Buddhist thinker himself, and a remarkably serious one at that. Hence, his position is, from my point of view, an authentic Buddhist one. One which is, to be sure, not favourable to my own attempt to search for a basis of ecological ethics within the Buddhist tradition itself, but rather one steering the anthropocentric or anthropocratic course.

65.2 This would seem to become clear from the concluding paragraph of his article (*H* 399 a8f), where he declares that a Buddhist rises above nature and becomes her master and owner (仏教徒は «自然» から飛翔し «自然» の主人にして所有者 ... となる ...). Such a view would perfectly fit in with the spirit of early Buddhism if "nature" were understood as one's o w n "nature", in the sense of one's own mind or one's own drives and emotions, etc., becoming the master of which is an ubiquitous theme in

[338] This is also the normal situation in Vedic religion. The ascetic (i.e. śramaṇic) movements, on the other hand — perhaps generalizing and developing special situations like that of the *brahmacārin* and/or *sannyāsin* — have come to regard ritual annulment as ineffectual and/or immoral and hence have tried to map out, at least for the monk, a way of life of consistent *ahiṃsā* in which the inhibitive influence of "animism" can fully assert itself (to the extent at least to which "animism" is preserved).

[339] Cp. the increasing percentage of people holding the view "man must conquer nature" — as against "man must adapt to nature" — in the statistical data from 1953 to 1968 presented in Harumi Befu, Japan: An Anthropological Introduction, [4]Tokyo (Tuttle) 1987 (1st ed.: 1971), 171.

Buddhist texts.[340] But the context suggests that "nature" is to be understood in the sense of external nature. To be sure, as pointed out in §§ 20ff, there is, in fact, a strand in Buddhist tradition which glorifies civilization and domestication of wild nature. But this is by no means a specifically Buddhist attitude. It rather seems to be the dominant one in most post-hunter-gatherer societies. It is not shared by the Buddhist hermits (see §§ 25.1ff), and it cannot be derived from the core of early Buddhist spirituality, which rather suggests d e t a c h m e n t from nature, not mastery or ownership. In fact, as already stated above (§ 63.5), it is in the context of detachment that the canonical texts use the idea of non-self. Even if the non-acceptance or denial of a self is considered as the core of Buddhist spirituality, I for one do not understand why this should imply that man is the master and owner of nature. On the contrary, it clearly contradicts such an idea, since from a logical point of view the non-existence of self and mine obviously excludes the existence of a master or owner as well as the opposition of an owner (man) and something owned (nature). The idea that man (be he a Buddhist or not) is the master and owner of nature is obviously borrowed from the Western tradition, more precisely from the philosophy of Enlightenment, as is also betrayed by the fact that Hakamaya has taken this phrase from Descartes's Discours de la méthode[341] which he quotes in the original French: "maîtres et possesseurs de la Nature". Hence, this is hardly "genuine Buddhism" but rather Cartesianism in a Buddhist garb.

65.3 But even Hakamaya (*H* 399 a9f) concludes his final statement with the words:

> "For that matter, [a Buddhist] must guard nature from destruction (... ことによって «自然» を破壊から守るのでなければならない)."

A consoling conclusion, no doubt. But one cannot help asking: Why in the world should a Buddhist do so, if, as Hakamaya stresses, Buddhism entirely negates nature?

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340 Cp., e.g., Dhp 35; 37.

341 R. Descartes, Discours de la méthode, ed. Gäbe (1960), 101; cp. Hist.Wb.Phil., vol. 6, 523.

Abbreviations

[Note: Pāli texts are quoted according to the editions of the Pāli Text Society, though for the basic texts and Sp I have used the Nālandā edition. Unspecified references to §(§) refer to the present paper.]

Add.	Additions to "Buddhism and Nature" (= 2nd part of the present paper).
AKBh	Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (Vasubandhu), ed. P. Pradhan, Patna 1967.
AKVy	Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośavyākhyā (Yaśomitra), ed. U. Wogihara, repr. Tokyo 1971.
AN(-a)	Aṅguttaranikāya(-aṭṭhakathā)
Āyār$_S$	W. Schubring, Ācārâṅga-sūtra, Erster Śrutaskandha, Leipzig 1910.
BCA	Bodhicaryāvatāra (Śāntideva), ed. P. L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1960.
BoBh	Bodhisattvabhūmi (ascribed to Asaṅga), ed. N. Dutt, Patna 1966.
CMT	Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra, ed. Chr. S. George, New Haven 1974.
Dasav	Dasaveyāliya, ed. E. Leumann and transl. W. Schubring (Ahmedabad 1932); repr. in: Schubring, KlSchr, 109ff.
Dhp(-a)	Dhammapada(-aṭṭhakathā)
DhSk$_D$	Fragmente des Dharmaskandha, ed. S. Dietz, Göttingen 1984.
DN(-a)	Dīghanikāya(-aṭṭhakathā)
EncBuddh	Encyclopedia of Buddhism, ed. G. P. Malalasekera, Colombo 1961-.
fn(s).	footnote(s) to the present paper
H	see fn. 297.
Hist.Wb.Phil.	Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie, ed. J. Ritter, Basel/Stuttgart 1971-.
IBK	Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū
Jā	Jātaka
JIABS	Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies
Jm$_V$	Jātakmālā (Āryaśūra), ed. P. L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1959.
LAS	Laṅkāvatārasūtra, ed. B. Nanjio, repr. Kyoto 1956.
MBh	Mahābhārata (crit. ed., unless specified otherwise)
Mil	Milindapañha
MN	Majjhimanikāya
MPPU	Mahāprajñāpāramitā-Upadeśa (ascribed to Nāgārjuna): T vol. 25 (No. 1509).

$MPPU_L$	É. Lamotte, Le traité de la grande vertu de sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra), 5 vols., Louvain 1944-1980.
MPSMah	Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra: T vol. 12 (Nos. 374-376).
MSA	Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra, ed. S. Lévi (Asaṅga: Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra), Paris 1907.
n(s).	note(s) in works other than the present paper
Pāc.	Pācittiya Section of the Pāṭimokkhasutta (in Vin IV).
Pār.	Pārājika Section of the Pāṭimokkhasutta (in Vin III).
Plants	L. Schmithausen, The Problem of the Sentience of Plants in Earliest Buddhism, Tokyo (The International Institute for Buddhist Studies) 1991.
ṚGV(V)	Ratnagotravibhāga(vṛtti), ed. E. H. Johnston, Patna 1950.
Ryōgen, Sōmoku	Ryōgen, Sōmoku hosshin shugyō jōbutsu ki, in: Dainihon-bukkyō zensho, 1978, vol. 24, 345f
SDPT	Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra, ed. T. Skorupski, Delhi 1983.
Śikṣ	Śikṣāsamuccaya (Śāntideva), ed. C. Bendall, repr. 's-Gravenhage 1957.
SN	Saṃyuttanikāya
Sn(-a)	Suttanipāta(-aṭṭhakathā)
Sp	Samantapāsādikā Vinaya-aṭṭhakathā (Buddhaghosa)
ŚrBh	Śrāvakabhūmi (ascribed to Asaṅga), ed. K. Shukla, Patna 1973.
STTS	Sarvathāgatatattvasaṃgraha, ed. Lokesh Chandra, Delhi 1987.
SWTF	Sanskrit-Wörterbuch der buddhistischen Texte aus den Turfan-Funden, ed. H. Bechert, Göttingen 1973-.
T	Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō (Buddh. Tripiṭaka in Chinese, Taishō ed.).
TattvBh	Sa-bhāṣya-Tattvārthādhigamasūtra (Umāsvāti), Bombay 1932.
Th(-a)	Theragāthā(-aṭṭhakathā)
Tj	Tanjur (Peking blockprint, ed. D. T. Suzuki, Tokyo and Kyoto 1955-).
Ud(-a)	Udāna(-aṭṭhakathā)
Uv	Udānavarga, ed. Franz Bernhard, Göttingen 1965.
Vi	(Abhidharma-)Mahā-Vibhāṣā(-śāstra): T vol. 27 (No. 1545).
Vin	Vinaya
VisM	Visuddhimagga (Buddhaghosa), ed. Warren and Kosambi, Cambridge, Mass. 1950.
Y	Yogācārabhūmi (ascribed to Asaṅga), ed. V. Bhattacharya, Calcutta 1957.

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